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BOMBAY BRANCH
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TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

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KHIVA AND TURKESTAN.

KHIVA AND TURKESTAN.

60337
a.c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN

BY

CAPTAIN H. SPALDING, F.R.G.S.

With a Map.

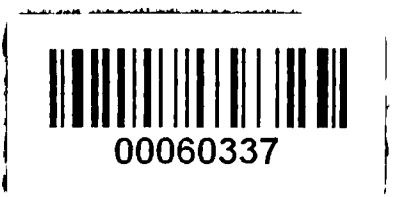
Rx. d. 14.

LONDON.
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1874

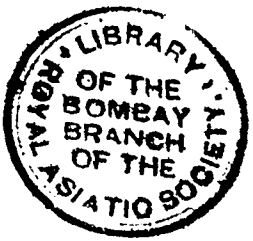
915.85
Spa / Khi
60337

Ref.
958.5

LONDON:
PRINTED BY VIRTUE AND CO.
CITY ROAD.



CENTRAL AND WESTERN ASIA.



PREFACE.

In bringing this work to the notice of the public, the translator trusts that it will, in some measure, answer a twofold purpose: firstly, by affording exact and reliable information regarding the remote region of which it treats, a region all the more interesting to Englishmen that it lies in comparative proximity to Hindostan; and secondly, by representing this subject from a Russian point of view, and enabling us to judge the question from their stand-point. There are always two sides to a question, and never is this truth more indisputable than in cases of international rivalry or disagreement. Without wishing to be the apologist of the entire policy of Russia, the translator believes that an impartial study of her history will considerably modify the unfavourable opinions constantly expressed regarding her.

The great difficulty which Russia, on emerging

from barbarism, has had to contend against is her geographical situation with regard to the sea. It is true that she has, though only in modern times, access to numerous inland seas, such as the Caspian and Black Seas and the Baltic; but the ocean itself is only open to her, in an unrestricted sense, on the frozen shores of her northern coast, or the likewise frozen shores of Eastern Siberia. It is thus that, since Russia took her place in the conclave of civilised nations in the reign of Peter the Great, her existence has been an almost uninterrupted contest for a seaboard. Peter himself occupied Azoff, established himself on the Caspian, and annexed the Baltic provinces of Livonia, Esthonia, and Ingria; next came the conquest of the Crimea by Potemkin, under Catharine the Second, whilst finally, the absorption of Finland during the reign of Alexander the First completed the coast-line of the Russian Empire on the Baltic.

In this series of conquests and annexations, and in others, we see the natural struggles of a rising nation for unity, and access to the coast, not altogether through the impulsion of ambitious autocrats, but, we submit, chiefly through natural causes. Doubtless great wrongs were committed, and gallant nations, such as the Finns and Poles, cruelly trodden under foot; but such are the scenes

which usually accompany the development of a people's history, and we must never forget, when considering them, to look at the reverse side of the picture; at Russia herself, for instance, trodden down and ravaged for centuries by the armed heel of the restless and warlike Polish aristocracy. It would seem as wise to regret the Saxon Heptarchy as to allow ourselves to be prejudiced against Russia on account of her past annexations.

As regards the extension of the Russian Empire in Asia, we, as the Russians themselves truly remark, are the very last people who ought to condemn them, since the analogies between our empire in Asia and theirs are both numerous and striking. Both founded by private enterprise, both have proceeded from conquest to conquest and from annexation to annexation, owing to the operation of similar causes, till both are at length in what, in that vast continent, is comparative proximity, a proximity so close as to call forth the quite unreasonable fear of a Russian invasion. But the reader who peruses this volume will be able to judge for himself; he will see that Russia has been impelled, by the same causes as ourselves, in her career of conquest in Asia, and, what is more, that the same jealousy, the same vague suspicions of hostility which we are accustomed to harbour against Russia, influence the Russian mind to an

equal extent against ourselves. It is only by a closer intercourse between the two countries, and by each seeking to become acquainted with the thought and national tendencies of the other by studying its literature and periodicals, that this mutual distrust can be dispelled.

The Russians have conducted their enterprise to a successful issue in a manner foretold in the closing pages of this work. The main body of their troops is now retiring from the khanate, leaving behind a provisional government to assist the Khan until such time as the war indemnity shall have been paid. The success of the expedition will prove a blessing to the whole of Central Asia. One of the first consequences of the fall of Khiva has been the liberation of those Persian captives whose cruel fate is described in these pages, and the abolition of slavery in its chief stronghold. These facts alone should make us join in applauding the triumph of Russia. Science will gain by the exact surveys and maps that are being executed by Russian officers, whilst, from recent accounts, it appears probable that the river Amou will once again be made to flow by its ancient bed into the Çaspian Sea. The official *Gazette de Turkestan* states that the existence of the dyke of Ourona, which turned aside the waters of the Amou from the Caspian into the Aral Sea, is a

fact perfectly established, whilst it has been ascertained by Colonel Gloukhovski and the Baron de Kaulbars, two Russian officers, that, at all events as far as the lake of Sari-Kamysh, the return of the river into its old course would cause no injury to the population of the khanate.

As a fit prelude to the present work, we subjoin an extract from a recent number of the *Invalide Russe*, treating of the camel service during the late operations in Central Asia.

"The troops left Tashkend early in March. The muster of camels began in Tashkend two weeks before the commencement of operations. This muster proceeded according to order. Each district furnished its appointed quota of camels. A leader was appointed to each party of five or six, whose duty it was to conduct them during the campaign, and look after them during the halts. A foreman was appointed to several of these parties. The camels were counted, their leaders inscribed on the rolls, and apportioned to the different sections of troops. During the time of assembling at the appointed place the animals were, strictly speaking, without food. Being always weak in the spring, they thus became still weaker. Besides this, weak and sickly animals were found amongst the general mass, and these it was impossible to apportion. Thus

the camels left Tashkend under by no means favourable conditions. During the very first marches they began to lag behind and fall. As far as Kly the loss was not great; but there snow fell and caused a frightful mud, which froze at night, and made the march to Nourek very trying. As far as Temir Kobouk the loss of animals was considerable, though they found fodder and water everywhere. A committee appointed for the purpose at Temir Kobouk reckoned as follows:—254 abandoned, who were dead or dying; 102 unfit to march unladen; 202 weak, who could proceed unladen; the whole forming a percentage of 18·33 on the total number of camels with the Jisak column (3,040). On entering the sands of Kizil Koum, and during the further advance on the Amou, the loss in camels experienced was still greater. Fodder was wanting, and sometimes the water sufficed for the horses only. Meanwhile, it became necessary to make the length of the marches conform, not to convenience, but to the distance between the wells, without which it was of course impossible to bivouac. In consequence of this, marches of thirty-five and even forty versts occurred. Such distances in themselves necessitated a considerable strain on the strength of the animals, and to this must be added that, in the expectation of collision with the enemy, we were

obliged to march *en masse;* wherefore, during the march, the head of the column had to halt two or three times, in order to give the rear time to close up. These delays lasted half an hour or more, thus increasing the time of movement and delaying the arrival in camp till after mid-day. Thus, as the camels always assembled in camp at nightfall, a very limited time remained for feeding. The above-mentioned delays, besides cutting short the feeding time, acted very injuriously on the animals. Those experienced in their habits affirm that a camel suffers less from travelling for three quarters of an hour than from standing still under a load for half an hour. The column from Kazalinsk, which left Tamdy with 2,200 camels, and that from Jisak, which had 4,285 at Kly, arrived at Kala Ata with only a little over 3,000. If to the original number we add 600 camels obtained from the Kirgiz of the Kizil Koum and the Bokharese, and also from carts arriving from the rear, we see that less than half the original number of animals arrived at Khala Ata. Of this half, 2,700 reached Alty Koudouk on the 4th of May, and, on the 9th of May, only 1,700 departed from Adam Krylgan. Only 1,200 camels, about 20 per cent. of the original number, arrived at the passage across the Amou. On an average, the force lost fifteen camels every two versts. The animals in the carts are

not included in this enumeration. Of the 1,200 camels which arrived at the passage of the Amou, 300 were sent to Alty Koudouk for the baggage which had been left there; 300 more were found unfit for further service, whilst 600 only could be transported to the left bank for a further advance on Khiva."

Thus we see that, out of over 7,000 camels which started from the banks of the Jaxartes with the column of Turkestan, only 600 reached the Oxus.

Such a recital may assist the reader in forming an idea of the difficulties to be surmounted during a campaign in the steppe.

LONDON,
27th October, 1873.

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N.B.—In rendering proper names into English characters, the following rules have been observed :—

ou is pronounced as in French.
kh as the German guttural *ch*.
ch as in English.
a and *i* as in German or Italian.

KHIVA AND TURKESTAN.

I.—TURKESTAN.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction.—Sketch of the gradual Consolidation of Russian Power in the Steppe.

In spite of small population and the sterile and desert steppes which separate the commercial centres on the Volga and Caspian Sea from the fruitful oases lying on the Sir and Amou Rivers, and notwithstanding the difficulty of communication between our eastern governments and the Central Asian territories, the broad countries of Central Asia have a great importance for Russia. Here Russian power and civilisation must develop themselves inflexibly and unceasingly, in spite of all obstacles, from whatever quarter they may come. The whole question is exclusively a matter of time. It would be vain for any one to think of

offering opposition; it lies not in the power of man to turn Russia aside from the path appointed her by nature herself, by her geographical position, and the natural order of things. We say "it lies not in the power of man," because the force of events is ever superior to the power of man. Is it long ago since we stood upon the Oural, separated by thousands of versts from those Central Asian khanates which now constitute our frontier? Is it long ago since neither Government nor society thought of the river Sir, which now is in our hands? Is it possible that any one will seriously say that this forward movement is called forth by a thirst for extension of frontiers whose dimensions are already so large as to act disadvantageously? Is it possible, in reality, that the acquisition of some square miles, with a population in the lowest state of civilisation—a population which is incapable of sympathizing with us, both on account of its religious ideas and of its manners and customs—can be important to Russia? It is intelligible that the English, and lately the Germans also, should attempt to explain every movement of ours in Central Asia by an aggressive policy; but it is quite inexplicable that a portion of Russian society should regard this question from the same point of view, and suppose that it depends on ourselves to avoid movement in Central Asia, and

not on a thousand other circumstances not to be controlled by us. The English know better than any that in Asiatic affairs it is never possible to foresee where one will stop; and if, in the gradual conquest of India, the commercial and aggressive policy of the English played a significant part, almost the identical circumstances, which the English found themselves unable to control, have had their influence on us.

This is not the place to discuss the circumstances and combinations which have led us to our present position in Central Asia, and we omit to bring them forward, not because it is an embarrassing task, but simply because much more has been said on this subject than was called for. Have not we ourselves, by our baneful system of justifying every step we take in Central Asia, brought matters to this pass, that the English organs of the press almost demand an account of Russia for her deeds in neighbouring territories? But what would the English people say, if the Russian press suddenly took it into their heads to ask England questions regarding her campaigns in Cashmere or Bhootan? Every class in England would revolt against such a demand; and they would be right.

Lately, however, certain English journals, seeing the impossibility of obviating the circumstances

which constitute the known order of events in Central Asia, have calmed themselves, and find that Russia could not act otherwise. Regarding our internal affairs, we suppose that if we need not attend to the censures of a foreign power, we are also not in need of foreign approbation; and that we shall do that which we find conformable to our own interests, and towards which we are urged by the force of circumstances which we only are in a position to estimate correctly. Blame and praise are both equally useless. When we were behind the Oural, a whole steppe was before us, inhabited by rapacious Kirgiz who carried off people from our frontier into captivity. Our position was evidently disadvantageous; however, we stopped there as long as was requisite, earning undoubtedly the unqualified praises of England for our self-abnegation. But there arrived a time when, in virtue of certain circumstances, we found it indispensable to advance, occupy the Sir, and establish a flotilla on the Aral Sea —and we did so, in spite of all remonstrances on the part of England. Even then there were persons who said that, sooner or later, our neighbours of Kokan and Bokhara would by their proceedings cause us to advance still farther and occupy Tashkend. At that time, twenty years back, such people were scarcely regarded as sane, and it was roundly

declared that such a step on our part would lead to war with England in coalition with Europe; but now our troops are not only in Tashkend, but somewhat farther—in Samarkand and Koulja, whilst the English press calmly reconciles itself to this, because it is impossible to effect aught against the force of those circumstances which conduct us irresistibly onwards in spite of our preconceived plans.

And who knows whither the necessities of self-defence and our commercial interests may conduct us? Let those who will cry out against our invasion of the Khivan Khanate, but we boldly say that neither approval nor censure can be our guide in this matter. Our own combinations must be the sole standard and motive power; and we are persuaded that no amount of approval will induce the Russian Government to endure the scoffs of a half-savage Khan, who oppresses in captivity Russian prisoners dragged to Khiva by the robber Turkomans and Kirgiz. And if ever the Russian interests in Asia deserved attention, it is assuredly at the present moment. On the one hand, our Asiatic frontiers are surrounded by nations of the Mussulman faith, in whose midst fanaticism is awakened; on the other, amongst the Japanese and Chinese is aroused that first activity which radical reforms of their whole mode of

life, unchanged for ages, draw after them. Thus, if we do not wish to see arrayed against us—on the one side millions excited by religious fanaticism, and on the other, millions also of a people which has acquired all the recent European inventions in the way of civilisation and the art of war —we must be very watchful of our Asiatic possessions, not confining ourselves to half-measures, but acting energetically, rationally, and disregarding those to whom this course may be disadvantageous.

There can be no doubt of this, that in the future closer relations will exist between ourselves and that part of Central Asia lying between the English possessions in India and our present frontier line. The English Government and press fully acknowledge that this event is inevitable, and already are occupied in devising some combination by means of which such close contact may not act prejudicially on the extensive possessions of Great Britain in India. Doubtless the desire to keep Russia as far distant as possible from India will play a leading part in these transactions, by arraying against her such political combinations as are in the highest degree advantageous for England and disadvantageous for Russia. But as the affairs of Central Asia are incomparably better understood in England than in Russia, and as the

ruling classes of the former, well educated and excessively sensitive as regards British possessions, however distant they may be, keep a wary eye on them and permit no encroachment, it evidently behoves us to be very prudent, in order to preserve in our own hands those advantages belonging to us by right, and to avoid falling into cunningly laid pitfalls. We may boldly maintain that, if ever we be placed in a disadvantageous position with regard to Central Asian affairs, it will not be the consequence of anything but our own awkwardness in managing our own business, and of the indifference of society itself, which only of late has acquired any ideas on Central Asian subjects. Concerning this, a strange fact is noticeable in Russia. Nowhere is so much ignorance of Central Asia displayed as in Russian society, whilst all the while, until very lately, the chief sources of information regarding this country were in great part Russian; and when in Europe none had an idea of Central Asia, among us, in the "Great Survey Book," is found minute information regarding the river Sir, the Sea of Aral, the Kara Koum sands, the Kara Tau mountains, &c., &c. Since then Central Asia has become known to all the world, and few Englishmen have not a general idea of our position there, whilst we Russians hardly knew more on this subject than is con-

tained in the "Great Survey," until within the last ten years. During this time the subject has become known to Russians to this extent, that we have information regarding the states of Kokan, Bokhara, Khiva, and other Central Asian territories.

If in former times it was possible to arraign our literature for this ignorance, it can by no means be said so now, for in the last ten years literary materials have been amassed to superfluity, and it would only be necessary for him who is desirous of seeking information regarding Central Asia, to search for these materials in various publications, but principally in those devoted to the subject.

In order to lighten this labour, and having in view the interest which our recent proceedings in Central Asia awake, we undertake a task which we trust will not prove useless. We undertake to compile a magazine containing descriptions of all the Central Asian kingdoms lying between our possessions and British India. As at present our interests have clashed with Khiva, the nearest road to which from the Caspian passes through the Turkoman steppe, where we also encounter hostile action, we shall commence our survey with the steppes of Turkestan. The following is the order we propose to observe :—

I. Turkestan.

II. Khanate of Khiva.

III. Khanate of Bokhara.
IV. Khanate of Kokan.
V. Afghanistan.
VI. Beloochistan.

In these sketches readers will find arranged all the facts touching the geography, statistics, and ethnography of these khanates, together with our relations with the same.

As regards the merit of this work we have not the least pretension to it; we simply wish to give our readers the opportunity of inquiry, which will be assisted to a considerable extent by the detailed map appended, and by the references to authorities, for those of our readers who may desire to obtain a more intimate acquaintance with any of the khanates.

Lastly, we think it desirable to present, in the first place, a short sketch of our advance into Central Asia, which commenced scarce a century ago.

The extension of Russian domination beyond the Volga and Oural Rivers began in the sixteenth century, immediately after the fall of the kingdoms of Kazan and Astrakhan. But neither the interior condition of Russia, nor the political combinations of that epoch, permitted much importance to this extension eastwards. At the accession of Michael Feodorovich the Cossacks of the Don, settled on the Yaika in the sixteenth

century, submitted to the kingdom of Moscow; and thus the aggrandisement of Russia commenced from the Oural. At the close of the same sixteenth century the aboriginal inhabitants of the Orenburg district—the Bashkirs—themselves sought the construction of a Russian town in their midst. Notwithstanding constant revolts, the power of Russia in Bashkiria was confirmed by the appearance of the towns Oufá, Samara, &c.

Peter the Great was the first Russian sovereign who, with the penetration natural to him, comprehended the whole importance for Russia of the Trans-Volga district. Being in Astrakhan in the year 1722, he expressed his opinion on this subject in the following terms:—"Although the Kirgiz horde is a wild and giddy people, this horde alone is the key and gate to all Asiatic countries."

In the reign of Anna Ivanovich the Russians took under their protection the Little Horde, which voluntarily sent in its submission; immediately afterwards our towns Omsk and Ouralsk, and the inhabited line on the banks of the Oural and Oui appeared. Since then, neither the incessant revolts of the Bashkirs, nor the incursions of the Kirgiz, nor even the revolt of Pougacheff,* could

* Pougacheff, a Cossack of the Don, who, in the year 1773, during the reign of Catherine II., excited a formidable rebellion in the south-

shake the Russian domination in those countries, and in a century we had advanced into the heart of the Kirgiz steppe.

We fix the year 1833 as the commencement of the Russian advance into the steppe, when, to defend our fishermen of Emba from the attacks of Turkoman pirates, the fort Novo Alexandrovsk, afterwards transferred to Mangishlak, was founded on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea. Afterwards, in the year 1833, before the Khivan expedion even, two fortifications were constructed in the steppe—one at Emba, and the other at Ak-Boulak—but both were but temporary, and, at the close of the expedition were at once evacuated.

A firm settlement in the steppe by the foundation of permanent forts there was commenced from the year 1847, when the steppe was put in commotion by the revolted Sultan Kanisara Kassimoff. Since then were constructed the forts: Orenburgsk, on the Tourgai; Ouralsk, on the Irgiz; and, in 1848, Fort Karaboutaksk, on the Karaboutak, a confluent of the Irgiz, for facilitating the communication of the steppe fortifications with the line frontier.

Our forward movement had a considerable effect

eastern provinces of Russia by personating the deceased Peter III. He was captured and executed in 1775.—*Translator.*

in pacifying the steppe nearest to the frontier, but had but little influence on the Kirgiz who roamed behind the Emba, or on the Oust-Ourt, or the Sir River. It is intelligible that, for the maintenance of our influence over the Central Asian khanates, and for the defence of our subject Kirgiz who rove on the Sir, as well as for the security of our caravans, it was indispensable to fix ourselves firmly on the Sea of Aral and the mouths of the Sir, where the natives of Khiva and Kokan had, in spite of every law, constructed a whole series of fortifications, with the object of holding the Kirgiz in awe, and of oppressing them by every sort of extortion.

The idea of establishing a fortified point with a Russian colony on the Sir appeared first in the year 1840, but was not carried out till 1847.

In 1846 General Obroucheff, Governor-General in Orenburg at that time, was permitted to occupy a point on the Aral Sea. Captain Schultz, of the General Staff, was therefore sent. His orders were to choose, at the mouth of the Sir, a suitable spot for a fortification; to collect information regarding the navigation and fishing of the river; to examine the channel of the river from the spot chosen for the fortification down to the mouth; and, lastly, to collect information regarding the advantages or inconveniences of settling this tract.

In the year 1847 Fort Raimsk, afterwards called Aralsk, was founded on the spot selected.

The Khivans could not see with indifference the consolidation of our power on the Sir, and in the year 1847 they commenced hostilities against us.

Subsequently, the Khivans made a few incursions in the course of the year 1848; but, routed at every encounter with our troops, they became convinced of their own impotence, and confined themselves to presenting demands insisting on the demolition of Forts Aralsk and Novo Petrovsk.

In 1850 hostilities were commenced by the Kokanese also, who, having constructed a fort near the mouth of the Sir, oppressed and plundered our subject Kirgiz. The Beg of Ak-Mechet, to whom were confided all the Kokan forts posted near the mouth of the Sir, was the chief author of these incursions. They were accompanied by fearful devastation. Thus in 1850, at the distance of 50 versts from Aralsk, the Kokanese drove off 26,000 head of cattle from the Kirgiz; another time as many as 30,000 head. Notwithstanding that, in the subsequent year, after the robbery of 75,000 head, Major Engmann, commandant of Aralsk, followed the Kokanese and took by assault their fort, Kosh Kourgan, the pillage continued. It was absolutely necessary to take active and efficacious measures for

arresting these incursions (on which Perovski resolved in the year 1852), and all the more so because we already stood with a firm foot on the Sea of Aral.

Our navigation on the Sea of Aral commenced at the same time as the foundation of Fort Raimsk. At the beginning of 1847, two two-masted vessels were constructed in Orenburg: one, a man-of-war, the *Nicholas;* the other private, the *Michael.* The first was destined exclusively for the exploration of the sea; the other for the establishment of a fishery, formed in the same year by a share-holding company. Both vessels therefore were taken to pieces, and in the spring transported in carts to Raim, where they were again put together and launched. The schooner *Nicholas* put to sea immediately; but her first cruise was limited to the environs of the mouth of the Sir, on account of the lateness of the season. The following spring the schooner again put to sea, and explored the northern shore. Meanwhile another vessel of war, the *Constantine*, somewhat larger than the first, was constructed in Orenburg. Upon this vessel Lieutenant Boutakoff commenced a full survey, lasting two years, of the Sea of Aral. During the two months' cruise of the *Constantine* in 1848, all the shores of the Aral Sea were explored except the western; in the course of the campaign of

1849 they were quite completed: astronomical definitions of points, sketches of the shores, measurements, and in fact a complete survey, so that the Aral Sea has since become exactly known.

In 1850 General Obroucheff proposed to establish navigation on the Sir, and for this purpose steamers were ordered in Sweden, which, in May, 1852, arrived at St. Petersburg in pieces; thence they were transported by water to Samara in the month of July.

On the 19th May, the steamers were at length equipped, and the steamer *Perovski* afterwards took part in the Ak Mechet expedition.

We have already said that in 1852 Perovski decided on taking the most energetic measures for bridling the audacity of the Kokanese. A pretext was afforded by the Kokanese themselves.

In the month of April, 1852, a surveying party, in number 80 men, under the command of Ensign Goloff, of the Topographical Department, was detained, not far from the fortress of Ak Mechet. The commandant of the fortification refused in decided terms to allow further progress. As the question of the union of the Orenburg and Siberian lines was already decided upon, and as this was only to be effected from the side of the Orenburg steppe by a movement up the Sir, it was indis-

pensable to continue the reconnaissance, even if force were called into requisition.

In consequence of this necessity, a detachment was collected in the summer to execute a reconnaissance in the Valley of the Sir from Aralsk to the Kokan fort Ak Mechet. In case of collision with the Kokanese, or in case of their making unreasonable demands, they were ordered to appeal to force, and, avoiding the forts adjacent to Aralsk, to proceed direct to Ak Mechet, and then act according to circumstances. If Ak Mechet lay within our boundaries, to attempt to destroy it; in any case to make known to the Kokanese that it would not be allowed to remain in its present position. The Kokanese, probably warned of the advance of our detachment, broke the dyke restraining the flow of the waters of the Sir into Lake Berkazan, the consequence of which was an inundation of the flats lying around Ak Mechet. In spite of this obstacle the detachment successfully, though laboriously, effected the passage of five branches.

The movement of the troops in the passage of the five branches was excessively fatiguing, owing to the inundation and the thick, prickly bushes through which it was necessary to make a way on narrow and deep footpaths, and on muddy ploughed fields. Arriving before the fort

on the 19th July, the detachment pitched its camp under the walls of the eastern face. The Cossacks, having no boats with the detachment, immediately betook themselves to the Sir, and found, near the right bank, two Kokanese boats; the topographers then executed the reconnaissance of the fort. After this, the detachment, having obtained several valuable surveys, commenced its homeward journey.

This reconnaissance, completed by a small detachment at a distance of five hundred versts from our last fort, and fifteen hundred from the frontier of civilised Russia, was important in a military aspect. In six weeks the detachment travelled more than one thousand versts, having surmounted extraordinary local difficulties and supported a stifling heat. Without vessels or pontoons it effected successfully the passage of considerable rivers and streams; it demolished three hostile forts and destroyed the exterior defences of the citadel of Ak Mechet. But besides, this reconnaissance rendered possible an approximate estimate of the measures necessary for the final destruction of the fortifications situated on the right bank of the Sir.

The Kokanese were constructing at that time, on the space between Kara Ousiak and the Sir, a species of circle defended by forts, of which

Ak Mechet served as a central point for the government of the district. Here, besides Turkomans and natives of Tashkend, were to be found as many as five thousand Kirgiz tents. Besides these, about three thousand tents arrived from the Russian frontier during the winter. All these were subjected to the most burdensome imposts, and even to pillage.

In the following year, 1853, it was resolved to occupy Ak Mechet, cost what it might. The preparations were, therefore, commenced in the same year; in the early spring of 1853 the troops started from the frontier, and on the 5th of July Perovski, from the neighbourhood of Ak Mechet, sent its commandant the following letter:—

From the GOVERNOR-GENERAL *of Orenburg, to the* COMMANDANT *of the Fort Ak Mechet.*

By the order of my Sovereign, the Emperor of All the Russias, I have come to take Ak Mechet, constructed by the Kokanese on Russian ground for the oppression of the Kirgiz, our subjects.

Ak Mechet is already captured, although you are in possession of it. You shall see that I, without any loss to my people, can destroy all of you to the last man.

The Russians have not come for a day or a year, but for centuries; they will not return.

Do you desire to live? then ask for mercy; do you wish to die in Ak Mechet? it is in your power to do so; I am in no hurry. I do not hurry you; but I repeat, I have not come here to fight you but to slay you unless you open your gates.

I would have told you all this on the first day of my arrival, when I approached unarmed the walls of your fort, if you had not fired on me in a treacherous manner; this is not usual among soldiers of honour.

An answer was to be sent in the evening.

The envoy was admitted into the fort, and towards evening the firing was stopped on both sides. In the evening the envoy returned with a letter from the commandant. The answer was to the effect that the present Government of Kokan was not answerable for the misdeeds committed at the time when the Kipchaks governed the country; that the Russian detachment had approached the fort without declaration of war, and that this itself had caused the Kokanese to fire on a flag of truce; that lastly, the commandant was prepared to evacuate the fort, provided the Russians gave him fifteen days for this purpose, and all this time remained at a distance from the fort. Otherwise the garrison would resist whilst "their muskets remained on their stocks, the hilts of their swords and shafts of their lances were unbroken, and their store of 'kisiaks'* unexhausted." Immediately afterwards, on the 27th July, the fort was taken.

The capture of Ak Mechet must have made a powerful impression on the Kokanese. Ak Mechet is a very important point for them in a military, commercial, and economical aspect. This fort was accounted the firmest defence of the Kokan

* Hard pieces of clay which they throw from the fort on the besiegers.

power on the Lower Sir; as a fort which had successfully endured several sieges it enjoyed the reputation of invincibility in the country. By this fact is explained its last desperate defence.' Its conquest by the Russians was a heavy blow for the Kokanese, and it was to be expected that, when their affairs were put in order, they would make more than one attempt to regain it. From this period we have had a complete frontier on the Sir, composed of the following fortifications :— Forts No. 1, 2, 3, and Fort Perovski (Ak Mechet).

Meanwhile, during the whole course of the Crimean War nothing of importance took place in the steppe with the exception of renewed incursions of the Kirzig hordes, especially of those under the leadership of Isset Koutebaroff. This individual, who attracted general attention in St. Petersburgh society in 1859, and whose photograph was long exhibited amongst those of other Kirgiz in one of the most popular streets of St. Petersburg, kept the steppe in commotion for almost twenty years. The last act of Perovski was an attempt to establish himself on the Kouvan River.

On this branch, westward of Fort Perovski, and 85 versts south-west of our Fort No. 2, was situated at that time the fort Khoja Niass, constructed about ten years previously. This was the most

distant fortified spot possessed by the Khivese towards the north, and served them as a protection against both ourselves and the Kokanese. But this point was not so important for Khiva in a military as in a financial aspect. Through it all the principal Bokharian caravans passed on their way to Russia and back; and here the Khivan Government levied on them considerable transit dues. For this purpose, as well as for that of levying imposts on the surrounding Kirgiz, a permanent garrison of one hundred men was quartered in Khoja Niass; the fort itself was furnished with a few cannon and wall muskets. Its founder was Khoja Niass, after whom the fort itself was named, and after him his son Irjan succeeded.

In the year 1856 Irjan, having received important intelligence of some sort from his relatives in Khiva, took forty men of the garrison and hastily betook himself thither. The Kirgiz roving in the vicinity, who already were dissatisfied with the Khivan Government, drove away the commander of the fort who remained, plundered the property of the Khivese, broke the wall muskets, and hacked to pieces the gun-carriages and guns.

The first result of this event, as regards us, was the increase of theft and pillage committed by

the Kirgiz of Khoja Niass, who before this were held in check by the Khivan authorities of the fort. For the prevention of these disorders it became necessary to dispatch a small detachment to Khoja Niass, and the opportunity was taken of making a survey of the locality. If we did not occupy the fort the Kokanese or Bokharese would do so. At this time a frightful contest was in progress within the Khivan territory. Several khans were disputing the supreme authority among themselves. Rumour said that the Khivese and Karakalpaks, wearied with dissensions, had requested the Khan of Bokhara to take them under his protection; this would have embroiled our relations with Bokhara, and in the future frequent and serious collisions would have to be expected. To the south of the demolished fort extend towards Bokhara and Khiva, for some hundreds of versts, waterless sands upon which it is impossible to move large bodies of troops; wherefore, these uninhabited sands would serve us as a frontier, both advantageous and secure in a military point of view, against the Bokharese and Khivese; lastly we had right also on our side.

It was previously believed that Khoja Niass belonged unconditionally to the Khivan Government. This idea was founded on the fact of possession. Meanwhile, inquiry being made on

the spot, when the proposal was made to occupy it temporarily, it appeared that the Kokanese did not in any way account it as belonging to Khiva; because, during the ten years that the fortification had existed, they had taken it twice and expelled the Khivese. On the last occasion the latter, for permission to retire, payed the Kokan Beg of Ak Mechet a considerable number of cattle. Consequently, the presence of the Khivese in Khoja Niass was only tolerated by the Kokanese. Thus we, as successors of the Kokanese in these parts, not to mention our older claims on the whole of their territory which had been occupied by the nomad Kirgiz of the Little Horde, had a complete title to call Khoja Niass our own. And if we did not in reality occupy this point, there were other reasons for not doing so.

From the surveys made by our detachments and from information received, it appeared that the clay walls of the fort and the dwelling places inside, which were all wooden, were burned or plundered by the Kirgiz. It was useless to think of repairing them, so it became necessary to commence erecting new ones. The position of Khoja Niass and its environs did not promise any economic conveniences for our garrison. On the other hand, the inconveniences were very palpable. The fort was built in the midst of the

marshes formed by the branches of the Kouvan River; fresh spring water was not to be found within two versts; there was little fuel, insufficient pasture, and communication with Fort Perovski, at all times inconvenient on account of the number of streams, was much more difficult in the wet season, so that the supply of provisions could not be sufficiently assured.

Thus the detachment, dispatched in the first place for the occupation of this point, destroyed the relics of the fortifications and returned home.

With this attempt the career of Perovski in the Orenburg district came to a termination.

Katenin, appointed after the death of the former, made public his ideas regarding our action in the steppe of Orenburg. Amongst other things, he considered it indispensable to the security of Fort Perovski to occupy Fort Joulek, which formerly belonged to Kokan. He was prevented by death from carrying this into execution. It was indeed done by Aide-de-camp General Bezak, who was permitted to demolish also the other Kokan fort, Yani-Kourgan, situated near Joulek.

At this time there were on the Sir the following forts:—Fort No. 1, Fort No. 2, and Forts Perovski and Joulek.

It cannot be said that the line of the Sir was at that time in a satisfactory condition.

At the time of its original construction two conditions were aimed at :—

1. To guard the frontier of the empire from predatory attempts made on the part of the Central Asian powers ; and

2. To secure as far as possible our commercial relations with the Khanates.

But it must be allowed that neither of these objects was attained.

Our forts were not in a condition to repel hostile incursions. It is true that their own safety was guaranteed, even in the event of their being attacked by the respectable forces of Khiva or Kokan, but they were not sufficiently powerful to hold in check the numerous hordes, protect our Kirgiz and caravans from robbery and violence, and restrain the audacity of the neighbouring tribes by the fear of immediate castigation.

In the interval between the fort on the left flank and the nearest Siberian fortifications on the River Sir Sou, the Kokanese were quite free to penetrate into both the Siberian and Orenburg steppes, and rob our Kirgiz.

The commercial intercourse between Russia and Khiva and Bokhara was thus by no means entirely protected by the forts on the line of the Sir. All the assistance which these forts afforded to the caravans consisted in placing at their disposal a

few boats for the passage of the Sir; but we were not in a condition to convoy or protect them; wherefore the ruler of Tashkend required the Bokharian caravans to pass through that town and pay an immense impost, whilst in case of refusal he pillaged them.

Communication between the Sir and Orenburg lines was facilitated between Orsk and Fort Ouralsk by the erection of Kirgiz postal stations; but between Fort Ouralsk and the line of the Sir lies the most sterile portion of the steppe, where water can only be procured from ditches. The establishment of regular communication across the desert of Kara Koum (black sand) offered still greater difficulties.

The supply of the troops composing the garrison of these forts was inconvenient and uncertain. The district occupied by the forts of the line of the Sir does not afford the means of supplying the troops with provisions and the most necessary articles of domestic use. Although the nomad Kirgiz occupy themselves in agriculture, they cultivate nothing but millet and barley, and of these only enough for their own consumption. They do not sow rye, but sow a limited quantity of wheat; agriculture will never flourish there till the Kirgiz become convinced that they can till the soil without danger of being pillaged by the

Khivese and Kokanese robber bands. The tilling of the fields is itself accompanied by severe labour, and irrigation is indispensable.

Sufficient vegetables for the winter are grown in regular kitchen-gardens, but very frequently the labour of the troops is completely lost through an attack of locusts, which it is impossible to guard against.

As regards the supply of the officers and civil *employés*, they cannot be said to be as favourably situated as the rank and file are in this respect. This results from the fact that it is impossible for them to obtain on the spot articles of the first necessity at a settled tariff and at all times. Our merchants conducted a very advantageous trade in cattle with the Kirgiz of the Sir, but, as it appears, despised the retail trade in the forts. The shops of our merchants near the forts, in which trade was carried on free of duty, frequently remained vacant. Everything sold in these shops was of wretched quality, and the prices rose at the pleasure of the shopkeepers, who well knew that it was impossible to buy elsewhere.

The absence of wood renders it impossible to manufacture the most indispensable articles of domestic use; the local material of construction consists of clay. Consequently it is necessary to procure everything, from the most urgent to the

most trifling wants, from Orenburg; and this necessity involves the exchequer in enormous expenses.

In a hygienic aspect, the Sir Daria line is in a very satisfactory condition. There are but few sick, and this principally is due to the climate of the country. Local medical men declare that the use of raw fruits and vegetables, even in immoderate quantities, is rarely accompanied by disorders of the stomach; wounds heal very rapidly, and all diseases, without exception, are of a mild type; some of them, such as affections of the chest and intermittent fever, are almost unknown.

Thus we occupied, at this period, the almost completely sterile line of the Sir. On the other hand, between Joulek and the Siberian fort Vernoe, lies the northern portion of the Kokan Khanate, famed for its fine climate, the productiveness of its soil, and its numerous conveniences.

In 1861 Bezak, having expounded in his report to the War Minister his ideas regarding the necessity of uniting the above lines, proposed to effectuate this by the joint efforts of the troops of the Siberian and Orenburg *corps d'armée*, who were to act in such wise as to unite under the walls of Tashkend, and take this town.

The possession of Tashkend was necessary, according to Bezak, for the following reasons:—

In the first place, Russia would acquire in this quarter an excellent frontier for her empire, and, in addition, if the Kokanese ever subsequently threatened Tashkend, its garrison could always receive succour from the forts on the Sir and the Siberian corps, through Auli Ata.

Secondly, the possibility of supplying our forts on the Sir cheaply would offer itself, by means of our Aral flotilla, which would thus be of real use to us, and remunerate us, to a certain extent, for the 45,000 roubles spent yearly on it. To this we must add, that the occupation of the country of the Upper Sir is necessary for the flotilla itself, because, on account of the absence of coal in that country and the dearness of anthracite, *saksaoul** is used in river navigation; but, as all of this in the vicinity of the river is soon consumed, our steamers can only, in this case, be supplied with fuel from the Upper Sir.

Thirdly, all the disagreements and *vendettas* between the Kokan Kirgiz and our own would be stopped, whilst the yearly assemblage of tents for trading would be increased.

Fourthly, we should acquire a locality near Turkestan where lead is to be obtained—a very important point, as we possess no lead mines of our

* A kind of brushwood whose botanical name is not settled.—*Translator.*

own, a circumstance very embarrassing to Government, as was experienced during the late war.

Fifthly, as Tashkend is the most important commercial town in that country, whither all the channels of trade from Bokhara, China, and Russia converge, and as Kokan, by the longest route, is only a hundred and fifty versts from it, thus, by the possession of Tashkend, we should acquire not only a decided influence over the khanate of Kokan, but should strengthen our influence over the khanate of Bokhara; this would considerably develop our trade with these countries, and more especially with the well-populated Chinese towns Yarkand and Kashgar, which, by forwarding their wares to the Sir, could float them by water to Fort Kazalinsk; conversely, our wares might be transported by this route in an opposite direction. Formerly they were carried by the Bokharese to the Chinese towns, wherefore our trade with Central Asia was considerable; but it was terminated by the weakness and imbecility of the Government of Kokan.

Lastly, the revenues of the Province of Turkestan, together with the increased assemblage of tents, would doubtless cover all our expenditure on the line of the Sir which now burdens the imperial exchequer.

"Certainly," continued Bezak, "complete co-operation on the part of the Siberian corps is indispensable for the attainment of such a result. I trust that when General Duhammel has become more closely acquainted with the situation of affairs, he will become convinced that there is nothing to be hoped from peaceful relations with Kokan, or indeed any Asiatic power, unless supported by arms. A lengthened experience has sufficiently manifested that these people do not comprehend the sanctity of treaties and commercial obligations; they respect force alone, and take every liberty with weakness."

"In conclusion," he proceeds, "with regard to our Kokan frontier, I count it my duty to say that, if we renounce all pretension to the khanate of Khiva, the English will not be alarmed at our movements on the Upper Sir, such as may extend our dominion eastwards; they would sooner take alarm at a movement of our troops southwards, towards the Amou, in the direction of India. I don't think, however, that the English really fear a campaign by us in India; in my opinion this is a chimera to which they will not yield, as they are a very practical people. Besides, as they are making themselves at home in China, they have no right to hinder us from protecting our own Kirgiz, or from rectifying our

frontiers. For the rest, having perused in papers here the declaration of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to our Ambassador in London, written in 1859, I surmise that our Government does not intend to renounce an advantageous organization of affairs here, merely because it does not suit the plans of the English. We must not delay, as it is easy now for us to settle accounts with Kokan; but if we let the English give them rifled arms, the task will then be incomparably more arduous and expensive. A pretext for taking possession of Tashkend is always to be found, as the neighbouring Kokanese, paying but a feeble allegiance to their own rulers, do not refrain from inroads into our territories, or from pillaging the Kirgiz subject to Russia, whilst all the country, as far as Tashkend inclusive, belonged to the Kirgiz at the time when they swore allegiance to Russia.

"Though I do not think it possible to take possession of Tashkend and Turkestan before 1863, yet I think it my duty to express minutely my opinions on this subject, in order that the authorities may consider a plan of future action in this country for both the Orenburg and Siberian corps, and direct the action of both towards one object."

General Kovalevski presented his memoir also, in which, sharing the opinions of Bezak, he pro-

posed to unite the Orenburg and Siberian departments, as well as that of the Kirgiz, into one government, and to this end to appoint a special Governor-General for the Kirgiz steppe, and designate Tashkend, on account of its convenient situation, the centre of government.

The proposals of Bezak and Kovalevski were considered in the presence of the Emperor, on the 9th March, 1862, by a special committee on the affairs of China and the organization of the line of the Sir. The committee came to the conclusion that it was necessary to consult previously the Governor-General of Western Siberia, and meanwhile, in the course of the spring of 1863, to permit the Governor-General of Orenburg to execute a reconnaissance up the Sir.

The Governor-General of Western Siberia proposed, in a memoir of the 26th May, 1862, to dispatch into the country beyond the Choui, on the approach of spring, a flying column, having for its chief aim the possession of the fort Auli Ata; those Kirgiz tribes who were disposed to offer submission would thus be protected. Afterwards, with a view to the permanent occupation of the Trans-Choui country, General Duhammel (Governor-General of Western Siberia) regarded it as necessary to erect at Auli Ata, or some other point, a fort in which, besides the regular

garrison, a movable column should be stationed. Regarding the conquest of Tashkend, General Duhammel showed that its occupation would cost us too dear, and proposed, in exchange, to form a separate khanate of it, on condition that its ruler be selected by ourselves and bound by obligation to admit our consul, and also to supply our garrisons on the line of the Sir.

On the 23rd of February, 1863, the Central Asian question was again submitted to careful investigation. The committee entrusted with the matter arrived at the conclusion that the unification of the frontiers was to a certain degree desirable, but that the enterprise, in consequence of financial reasons, must be deferred, and Auli Ata not occupied. The action of both Governor-Generals was to be directed to one common object, viz., the protection of the Kirgiz subject to our dominion.

In consequence of these resolutions nothing but reconnaissances was executed in the course of the spring of 1863, but a small Kokan fortification on the Sir, Yani Kourgan, lying on the road to Azret, was taken by the troops from Orenburg; the unification of the frontiers followed in the next year only. The Orenburg troops took Azret and the Siberian Auli Ata, (June, 1864). Thence both columns united under the command of

Colonel Chernayeff, who occupied Chekmend in the month of October. In the following year, 1865, Chernayeff, departing from the opinion expressed by the Governor-General of Western Siberia, hastened to seize Tashkend. But, having gained possession of Tashkend and investigated matters more closely, Chernayeff finally regarded it as indispensable to unite Tashkend with the empire.

As the situation of the southern boundary of the province was not sufficiently defined, General Romanovski, acting comformably to instructions given, annexed the Zachirchikski lands, lying to the south of Tashkend, to the province of Turkestan, and took the town of Khojend, situated on the left bank of the Sir.

The annexation of the Zachirchikski was rendered indispensable, because this district, the granary of Tashkend, was always dependent on the latter, forming, as it were, an integral part of it. Khojend was seized as the key of the Fergan valley, and as a *point d'appui* for keeping open the navigation of the Sir.

Aide-de-camp General Kryjanovski, who shortly after arrived in the province of Turkestan, thought it necessary to occupy the Bokharian fortresses of Oura-Tiube and Jisak, situated in the passes of the mountains; he had in view, first, to establish

himself firmly along the whole valley of the Sir, and second, to separate Bokhara from Kokan, and render it impossible for them to conclude a treaty for war against Russia.

Oura-Tiube and Jisak were taken; the former on the 2nd, the latter on the 18th October, 1866.

Thus at the close of 1866 our frontiers were advanced far to the south, to the snowy mountains of Kashgar; but meanwhile, prolonged warlike operations had prevented civil administration from taking root, and the affairs of the new district were in a very confused state. To establish order, and give the new district a form of government more conformable to its extent and economic importance, it was decided to form a separate circuit, having its centre at Tashkend, of the former province of Turkestan, with the addition of a portion of the Semipalatinsk Province. This new district was established in July, 1867, under the appellation of "Turkestan."

A temporary form of government, founded on a project elaborated by the Steppe Commission, was introduced; this Commission travels expressly for the purpose of studying the habits of the Kirgiz and settled population south of the Kara Tau Mountains. The circuit is divided into two provinces; that of the Sir, with the provincial town Tashkend, and that of Semirechensk, with the

provincial town Vernoe. Aide-de-camp General Kaufmann, appointed chief of the Turkestan Circuit, sincerely sought for peace with his neighbours. The Khan of Kokan, having experienced in the course of some years the might of the Russian arms and lost a considerable portion of his dominions, thought it necessary to make peace, and therefore signed unconditionally the treaty of peace presented him by General Kaufmann. The treaty bore the modest title of "Mutual Obligations for Trade between Russia and the Khanate of Kokan," and was concluded on the 29th January, 1868. The treaty consists of the following five articles:—

1. All towns and villages of the khanate of Kokan, without exception, to be open to Russian merchants; and similarly, all Russian markets free to Kokan traders.

2. Russian merchants to be permitted to have in the towns of Kokan, wherever they themselves wish, their caravanserai, in which they alone are to be allowed to store their wares. Kokan merchants to enjoy the same privilege in Russian towns.

3. To watch over the regular course of commerce and the legal levy of duties, the right is reserved to Russian merchants of having, if they desire it, commercial agents (*caravan bash*) in all the towns of the khanate of Kokan. This right is also reserved to the merchants of Kokan in the towns of Turkestan.

4. On all goods passing from the Russian frontier into Kokan, or thence into Russia (European or Asiatic), will be levied not more than in Turkestan, *i.e.*, 2½ per cent. on the value of the goods, in any case not more than from Mussulmans, subjects of Kokan.

5. Russian merchants and their caravans to be allowed free and secure passage through the Kokan dominions into those in proximity with them, exactly in the same way as the Kokanese caravans are to be permitted to travel through Russian territory.

The same modest conditions were demanded from the Emir of Bokhara; but the latter thought otherwise. A defeat near Irjar, and the loss of two important fortresses, Oura-Tiube and Jizak, did not bring the Emir to his senses, nor shake his resolve to try his fortune once more in strife with the Russians. For the space of six months the Emir deferred, under various pretexts, the signature of the amicable arrangement offered him. Informed of the proposed departure of General Kaufmann for St. Petersburg, the Emir thought to take advantage of it by attacking our territory, and, if successful, regaining what was lost before. But the Governor-General adjourned his visit to St. Petersburg in hope of receiving the conditions of peace from the Emir, confirmed by his seal. Meanwhile, in the middle of April, 1868, the latter had already collected numerous troops for the holy war against Russia, and various bands of Bokharians made a night attack on our camp at Kliuchevi, near Jizak. The Governor-General being cognisant of the hostile intentions of the Emir, rapidly moved to the front with a column, thinking that the massing of troops on the frontier of Bokhara, and our readiness to appeal to arms, would bring the Emir to reason, and induce him to agree to peace.

The Bokharese, however, were cunning and

wasted time, so General Kaufmann resolved to put an end to the intrigues of the Emir, by relieving him of all inclination for resistance. The better part of the possessions of the Emir, with the holy Mussulman town of Samarkand, was conquered and annexed to the empire. Besides this, the Emir promised to pay an indemnity of 500,000 roubles, and agreed to the same conditions of peace as Kokan had done. By the annexation of the four principalities (begstvo), Samarkand, Katti-Kourgan, Penjakend, and Ourgoutsk, we attained the following advantages:—

1. We acquired the most fruitful corner of Central Asia, and the best part of the famous valley Miankal, renowned in all Asia for its cultivation, fertility, and populousness. Possessing this portion, we have a right to count upon a surplus revenue enough to cover the disproportionate expenses of the maintenance of Turkestan.

2. The might of the Emir of Bokhara was for ever undermined; he has been placed, as regards us, in a position identical with that in which, since the year 1866, the Khan of Kokan has found himself, *i.e.*, simply that of a vassal.

Regarding our settlements on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, we may remark that Russia, now necessitated to make her way through the steppes of Turkestan by force, was formerly a

welcome ally of the Turkomans, who from the time of Peter the Great submitted to Russia, and not a little co-operated with the Russian forces dispatched by Peter to Khiva under the command of Prince Bekovich Cherkasski. After Peter, when nobody in Russia thought of the Turkomans, they themselves often requested to be received as subjects, and even to construct a fortification on the Caspian Sea. It is intelligible that in those times Russia could not think of establishing herself in the wretched steppe. In the year 1802, the Turkomans again declared themselves subjects of Russia, and the Government had resolved to establish a firm footing on the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea. However, this time also it again renounced its designs, owing to other combinations.

In June, 1819, Mouravieff traversed the steppe twice, from the Caspian to Khiva and back, and always found among the Turkomans a friendly disposition. Afterwards, in 1833, the Russians settled permanently on the eastern shores of the Caspian, and constructed Novo Alexandrovsk at the opening of the Mertvi Koultouk* into the Caspian.

Although the locality chosen for the fort was extremely inconvenient and disadvantageous in all

* The Dead Bay.

respects, commencing with the sanitary, yet it remained till 1846, when it was removed to Tiouk Karagan. In the period between 1833 and 1856 the Turkomans declared thrice their dependence on Russia, and demanded in return her protection.

In consequence of a more exact acquaintance with the eastern shore of the Caspian the construction of Krasnovodsk was commenced in 1870; also a military detachment was stationed near the mouth of the Attrek, at Chikishliar.

Having explained historically the course of our settlement in Central Asia, let us now proceed to the description of Turkestan.

CHAPTER II.

Character of the Turkoman Steppes.—The Caspian Sea.—Climate.—Natural Productions.—Roads through the Steppe to Khiva.—Population.—Social Organization.—Economic State.—Commerce and Trade.

BETWEEN the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, beginning in the north with the peninsula Mangishlak, and the Elbourz Mountains and the river Kara Sou in Persia, and eastwards as far as the Khivan and Bokharian territories, lie broad steppes inhabited by a nomad race known under the name of Turkomans, who have thus given their appellation to the steppe itself. It is certainly impossible to define precisely the boundaries of the Turkoman steppes in consequence of the constant peregrinations of the Turkoman tribes; thus the space designated by us is simply approximate, for the steppe itself is in great measure entirely unknown. It is more important for us to define the western frontier, as in this direction it is adjacent to our inland lake, the Caspian Sea. Here we may describe the boundary line

from Ashouraḍa on the south to Cape Tiouk Karagan on the north, a distance of nineteen hundred and twenty-six versts along the shores of the Caspian.

The whole of the Turkoman steppes consist of uninterrupted plains of sandy or saline soil, without any other vegetation than scattered clumps of *saksaoul* and dwarf acacias, and certain grasses common to the steppe. In one word, the steppe of Turkestan is a naked and mournful waste, in many parts lying below the level of the ocean. The only elevations of this plain are the mountains Chink, Balkhan, Kiuren Dagh and Kenesh Dag. The Chink is the steep declivity of the Oust-Ourt Mountains, or rather, a table-land extending between the Caspian and Aral Seas; the Balkhan Mountains lie on both banks of the ancient bed of the Amou, near the Caspian Sea; the last named lie on the right bank of the Attrek. The most important of these heights is the Chink, serving as a sharply defined boundary in all directions between the districts to the north and south of it.

The Caspian Sea, which bounds the Turkoman steppes on the west, has great significance as the means of shortest communication with the steppes. The eastern shore of this sea is characterised by its diverse nature as regards navigation and convenience for anchoring vessels. We must

remark, however, that the northern portion of the Caspian, as far as the latitude of Cape Tiouk Karagan, is very inconvenient for navigation, and ships must anchor at forty, fifty, or even sixty and seventy versts from the shore, and transhíp their cargoes into slow boats, which are able to approach the shore. Southwards of Cape Tiouk Karagan, as far as the Balkhan Gulf, the sea presents far more conveniences for navigation, as the shore does for roadsteads, which are here found in sufficient quantity. Thence as far as the Gulf of Astrabad there are no roadsteads; besides, in this region the shores are shallow, whilst fogs are prevalent on them in winter and autumn, and they are generally exposed to very violent winds.

The most remarkable peculiarity of the Caspian Sea is the quantity of salt found in the gulf Kara Bougaz (Black Gulf). This extensive basin communicates with the Caspian by means of a channel, whose breadth does not exceed three hundred yards, with a depth of about twenty-eight feet. The water constantly flows from the Caspian into the Kara Bougaz through this channel with a velocity of more than five versts* per hour. Although a westerly wind accelerates and an easterly retards its flow, yet the latter is never less than two and a half versts per hour. The Turko-

* 1 verst = 1,167 yards.

mans roaming on the shores look with amazement on the eternal flow of this salt river into a gulf where, until lately, the smallest boats dared not penetrate. Not without reason this inland sea has appeared like an abyss which swallows up the waters of the Caspian.

Now-a-days the origin of this current, which carries the salt waves of the Caspian into the gulf, is explained very simply. In the latter basin, which is open to every wind and exposed to the action of great heats, the mass of water is constantly diminishing. This deficiency can only be replenished by the uninterrupted influx of fresh liquid. The water supplied by the Caspian Sea leaves the gulf by evaporation only, whilst the salt remains in this immense morass, which becomes more and more filled up by it every day. At present, indeed, no living creature can exist in the Kara Bougaz. Seals formerly visited the lake, but are not now seen there. Even the shores are devoid of all vegetation, and the lead, when it is hauled up from the water, immediately becomes covered with crystals. The Academician Beer calculated approximately the quantity of salt discharged daily by the Caspian into the Kara Bougaz. Having taken the very lowest estimate of the degree of saltness of the waters of the Caspian, he found that the Kara Bougaz

receives daily three hundred and fifty thousand tons, as much as is consumed in the whole of Russia in the course of six months. If, in consequence of violent storms, or of the slow but constant action of the sea, the bar between the Caspian and the Kara Bougaz should completely close the entrance, the latter would soon be reduced in dimensions, and its shores would be converted into immense salt marshes, whilst the water which remained in the centre of the basin would degenerate into nothing more than a morass. It is conceivable that this black gulf might vanish entirely from the face of the earth, like the sea which once existed between lake Elton and the river Oural, and whose former existence is attested alone by an immense cavity lying seventy-nine feet below the level of the Caspian, and one hundred and fifty below the Black Sea.

Amongst the islands of the Caspian we may mention Cheleken, lying to the south of the Balkhan Gulf. Three thousand naphtha wells and a quantity of salt lakes are found in this entirely waterless island.

As regards rivers we can enumerate in all Turkestan only the Kara Sou, the Giurgen, the Attrek, the Tejend, and the Mourgab. They are all insignificant. The upper Giurgen alone is of any consequence, on account of its watering the

finest part of Turkestan, where many *aouls** of the Yomoud Turkomans are situated. Rich vegetation, both of trees and fruit, is met with in these places. This spot is a striking contrast with the remainder of the steppe. The Attrek, which overflows its banks in the wet season, enriches its valley with a mud which produces plentiful harvests. The Tejend and Mourgab lose themselves in the sands. Whilst speaking of existing rivers it is impossible to pass by in silence the dry bed of the Amou, which once flowed through the Turkoman steppe and fell, not into the Aral Sea, but into the Caspian. Its course was diverted in the thirteenth century. The existing dry bed begins at Kounia Ourgenj, then divides into two branches, unites again into one channel, and directs its course, first to the south, and afterwards to the west. The whole extent of the old bed is six hundred versts in length, and is filled in places with water, which is salt, however, proving its separation from the present channel of the Amou.

Thus poorly supplied with means of irrigation, it is plain that, in the steppes of Turkestan, wells must serve as the chief means of supplying water; but in these wells the water is always bitter and saline, and generally of bad quality.

The climate of the Turkoman steppes, like that

* Turkoman village of tents.

of all continents, is very dry, but healthy. Morasses are found only near the mouths of the rivers Attrek and Giurgen, where, in consequence of the injurious vapours emanating from the water left after the spring inundations, the air becomes unhealthy. The winter, though short in duration, is frequently very severe; snow does not lie long, and there is very little rain. In summer all vegetation is parched up from the heat, and reappears in the autumn. The heat becomes so great that the solar rays penetrate the sand a foot deep. The earth becomes so hot, that even the wild inhabitant of Central Asia, who generally considers any protection for the feet superfluous, is obliged to tie a piece of leather like a sandal to the soles of his feet.

As might be expected from the climate, the natural productions of the steppe of Turkestan are not various. If we except the upper regions of the Altrek and Giurgen, where, as we have already said, fruit-trees, such as the apricot, plum, fig, mulberry, and vine, as well as forest trees, are found, the remainder of the steppe presents the aspect of a wretched wilderness, where even grasses are seldom met with; this latter fact forms the chief obstacle, not only to the settlement of the steppe, but also to the mere transit through it.

Of the mineral kingdom we may mention salt, naphtha, sulphur, and coal. A part of the salt

obtained is sent for sale into Persia, and a part is taken by our fish merchants for salting down fish. Naphtha is chiefly obtained in the island of Cheleken to the amount of one hundred and fifteen thousand pouds;* a mill is now erected in Krasnovodsk for its rectification. This is a very useful substance, which is employed for lighting purposes, fuel, and even for steamers; it is specially important to our troops, who thus find on the spot a substance for which it would cost very dear to procure a substitute. The coal is not of a good quality. Sulphur is found in small quantities, and is used by the Turkomans for the manufacture of powder.

In the vegetable kingdom we meet occasionally millet, barley, wheat, sesamum, peas, rice, and even cotton; also melons and water-melons. All these growths are possible only where water, either spring, river, or well, is found. Such spots are found on the banks of the Attrek and Giurgen, also in some places near the shores of the Caspian.

Of the animal kingdom the following breed in the steppe: foxes, boars, gazelles, wild asses, hares, wild horses, tarantulas and phalangia, or "shepherd spiders." In the Caspian are caught sturgeon and seals, the number of which has,

* 1 poud equals 40 Russian pounds, or about 36 English.

however, diminished. Of domestic animals the steppes contain horses, sheep, and camels. The steppe roads from the eastern shores of the Caspian converge towards Khiva, a point where the Turkomans barter their productions with the Khivese, and where they sell Persian, and sometimes Russian, captives. Beginning at the north, the most important of these roads are the following:—

1. From the old fort at Novo Alexandrovsk, traversed by the Armenian, Tourpayeff, in 1834; its length to Khiva is 615 versts, and a caravan can traverse it in three weeks.

2. The caravan route from Bash Koudouk (south-west of Novo Alexandrovsk). It joins the former road. Its length is 850 versts, and a month is necessary for the transit.

3. From Kinderli Bay to Koonia Ourgenj past the mountains Karamek, 630 versts.

4. From Krasnovodsk, from 730 to 780 versts.

5. From Hassan Kouli to Khiva, 840 versts.

6. From Serebrianni (Vambéry's route), 800 versts.

7. Prom Balkhan Bay, by the dry bed of the Amou to Koonia Ourgenj, 578 versts; in twenty-eight days.

The roads leading from the Caspian to Herat are:—

1. From Krasnovodsk, by Kizil Orvad, Karyz, Askhabad and Sarax; 950 versts.

2. From Astrabad, through Meshed; 871 versts.

In general, all the roads leading from the Caspian to Khiva are completely steppe-like, where the troops in passing through must have everything with them, for they will find nothing the whole way except scanty vegetation for fuel, and bad well-water in the most insignificant quantity. Water is in these parts such a precious commodity that, in the belief of the Turkomans, "a drop of water given to a thirsty man in the desert washes away the sins of a century." It is easily understood with what difficulties a campaign in the steppe must be attended in these parts, especially as regards means of transport.

The Turkomans are divided into several tribes, each of which is composed of separate races, and these in their turn are subdivided into families. Each tribe roams apart from the other, and has its separate winter and summer haunts. It is impossible to give any exact information regarding the numbers of the Turkomans; various travellers who have traversed this steppe as far as Khiva, either entirely or only in part, adduce widely different figures. Some compute the

total amount of Turkomans at one hundred and forty-one thousand tents, others at four hundred and twenty-two thousand. The Turkomans themselves estimate the number of tents at three hundred and fifty thousand or nearly one million seven hundred and fifty thousand individuals of both sexes. Accepting as the most trustworthy Vambéry's figure, which was received by him from the Turkomans and reduced according to the degree of credibility of their depositions, we may arrive at this result, viz., that the total number of Turkomans does not exceed one million souls of both sexes.

Without going into a minute description of their races and their haunts, we shall confine ourselves to giving some information regarding those races which most deserve our attention, either from their being our neighbours or from any especially typical aspects of their character.

Between Balkhan Bay and Persia, on the Attrek and Giurgen, roam the Yomouds, of whom many *aouls* have a settled habitation and fields. But notwithstanding these signs of incipient civilization, they practise robbery and piracy both on land and sea in the Persian dominions. This tribe has waged for ages an interminable strife with the Goklens.

To the south-east of the Yomouds are found the nomad tribes of Teké, now the greatest robbers and pirates in the whole steppe. It was with this tribe we had to deal in our late advance from the direction of Krasnovodsk. It has become notorious for its enterprising courage, audacious rapacity, and constant depredations in the Persian dominions. By these qualities they are to be distinguished from the remaining Turkomans, and in that they live near mountains and gorges in which they can easily conceal themselves. In a word, these are the robbers of whom Vambéry says that nobody can expect mercy from them, and that they would sell as a slave the prophet Mahomet himself if he chanced to fall into their hands. Their fort Kizil Arbat was taken and destroyed by us in 1870.

The most southern of the Turkomans are the Salors, living on the River Mourgab, who are also renowned of old for their bravery.

Lastly, the Goklens, who live near the sources of the Attrek and Giurgen, are the most civilized tribe. They practise agriculture, horticulture, and cattle breeding. They account themselves subject to Persia.

With the exception of the tribes subject to Persia, of Bokhara and Khiva, and a small number of the Mangishlak Turkomans paying tribute to

Russia, all the remainder are completely independent, and it is impossible to discover one amongst them desirous either of ruling or submitting to the others. With all this, and notwithstanding this apparent anarchy and all the wildness of the people, we find among the Turkomans, whilst they are at peace with one another, much less internal robbery and murder, injustice and immorality, than amongst other Central Asian peoples. The representatives of the tribe act as *axakals*, *i.e.* elders, sometimes calling themselves *khans*. But these elders are only tolerated so long as it suits the people, and then, using their own words, they become a "people without a head, which is not necessary, for every man governs himself." The influence of the elders is so small that even the most solemn promises made by them to foreigners in the name of the people mean positively nothing. This insignificant influence of the *axakals* has been more than once experienced by both Persia and Russia, who have uselessly expended large sums of money on them, hoping thus to keep their tribes from making inroads.

Touching the submission, politically, of certain Turkoman races to their neighbours, it is very slight.

Our Turkomans of Mangishlak pay one rouble

fifty kopecks per tent, and although they obey the orders of the authorities, are not promising subjects. Thus even Khiva pets its Turcoman subjects, for they are an indispensable race, the need of whom is ever felt, for they bring slaves to Khiva for the cultivation of the fields, and purchase in return Khivan products. This need is especially sensible now that the Russian troops have appeared in the steppe, for the enmity of the Turkomans against us is very advantageous to the Khan. However, the attempts of the latter do not result in much. Lastly, as regards Persia, the Turkomans are intoxicated with their success, with their fortune in war, and scoff at her whenever her government threatens them with war. The three Persian provinces of Mazanderan, Khorassan, and Seistan especially suffer from their incursions. The best proof of how little the Turkomans care for Persia lies in their saying, that "no Persian ever approached the Attrek without a rope round his neck."

The chief bond of union among the Turkomans is their community of origin, tongue, religion, and customs. Custom—*debb*—plays the leading part amongst them. They all believe in the Koran according to the Sunnite interpretation, and esteem persons who devote themselves to religion, such as mullahs, khojas, and dervishes, although

these persons enjoy no influence. According to Vambéry, the religious fanaticism of Sunnites against Shiites does not underlie the hatred displayed against Persia, but simply cupidity and love of plunder. The fact that the Turkomans make incursions in exactly the same way into Sunnite Afghanistan, Khiva, and Bokhara, serves as confirmation of this. Lastly, the greater number of slaves in Central Asia are Sunnites and not Shiites.

A devout robber having been asked how he could make up his mind to sell his fellow-believers into slavery contrary to the ordinances of the prophet, coolly replied, "The Koran is a divine book, and consequently nobler than man; yet it is bought for a few crowns. And better still, if Joseph, the son of Jacob, was a prophet, and yet they sold him: did that hurt him in any way?"

As we said above, the most important concern of the Turkoman is this "debb;" it manifests much more influence than Islam, and many customs, forbidden and proscribed by the latter, have preserved their full hold on the Turkomans. Speaking generally, Mahometanism, except the belief in Mahomet and Allah, has penetrated but little into the interior life of the Turkomans, and has left it in the same aspect as it presented two thousand years ago.

In addition, the Turkoman has preserved his nomadic character in all its primitive nature. Even the half-settled Turkomans have a perfect abhorrence of everything which reminds them of home or a regular habit of life. Although certain Turkoman tribes have lived for centuries in the midst of the settled Ouzbeks, yet they shun their manners and customs, and avoid intercourse with them. The Ouzbeks, allied to them by origin and language, are no less alien to them than the Hottentots are to us.

We have already said that the Turkoman steppe is not very rich in natural productions, wherefore the material comfort of its inhabitants is extremely limited. All the property of the Turkoman consists in a felt tent, miserable clothes, a few camels, horses, sheep, and rams. If we add to these a few primitive agricultural tools, in the possession of those Turkomans who, having occupied a locality suitable for cultivation, practise agriculture, we have enumerated the whole property of the Turkoman.

The fields are sown with rye, barley, and white and red *sorgo*, the chopped straw of which serves as fodder for animals. As there is not sufficient space in the tents, the grain and straw are buried until winter in deep pits; rye and barley are usually harvested in July. The remaining

products of the soil are as follows: maize in small quantities; various sorts of melons, from which preserves dried in the sun are prepared; water-melons, here attaining such dimensions that sometimes a man can with difficulty carry two on his shoulders, are rose-coloured, yellow, and white, all very sweet and excellent in flavour; from the juice of the water-melon the Turkomans prepare a sort of honey, which they consider a dainty in winter; various sorts of pumpkins, from which the Turkomans manufacture powder-horns, and jugs and tankards for water—the pumpkins serving the latter purpose are immense in size, and remarkably strong; carrots, which are used both in a raw and cooked state; garlic and pepper, used by the Turkomans in large quantities; small, green, very hard, and difficultly boiled artichokes; the sesamum, the oil of which is used as a condiment, and for lighting in winter, the sediment, formed in its preparation, serving as fodder for camels. The Turkomans, obliged to confine themselves within certain limits for security from hostile inroads, cultivate on this account products indispensable for every-day use.

The little cattle that they possess consists of rams, goats, and a few cows and camels. They prepare butter from the milk of their animals; the sediment is formed into round balls, from

which all humidity is carefully pressed, and this cheese is afterwards carefully dried in the sun; in winter they heat the balls before using them for food.

Amongst the products above mentioned, the following may be considered as articles of commerce:—naphtha, salt, fish, and horses.

The amount of the export trade on the Caspian is:

Naphtha	125,000 pouds	for 40,000	roubles
Salt .	170,000 „	85,000	„
Fish .	450,000 „	50,000	„

Fishing is on the decline amongst the Turkomans, because the trade is gradually falling into the hands of the Russians; the time is not far distant when the same will happen with regard to the naphtha trade.

Considering in detail the different branches of the commerce of the Turkomans, we must observe that the Goklens and Yomouds, who live on the Attrek and Giurgen, occupy themselves in agriculture. The soil is here vegetable, and uncommonly productive, returning frequently a corn harvest of fifty and even sixty fold. The fields, whether irrigated or not, give a plentiful harvest of rice, wheat, barley, *jougara*, and a peculiar sort of pea called *mosha*. On the Giurgen we find small cotton and mulberry plantations. The superfluous

corn of these places goes in every direction: to the Turkomans of the Caspian, to the Balkhan Mountains, and to Persia.

The chief wealth of the Turkomans consists in their horses, which are of two breeds. The first, or proper Turkoman, does not belong evidently to the indigenous breed, but is produced by crossing. These horses are of medium size, and bear the marks of Arabian extraction; but they are somewhat taller than the latter, and their chests are less open. The head is handsome and well made; neck pretty strong; ears straight, and constantly in motion; eyes lively; nostrils broad; nose rather compressed, and withers high. In short, the horse is well proportioned, and has little depression of the back. These horses are untiring, obedient to the rider, and remarkable for their swift and easy gallop.

We must refer the second breed to the tall horses of Khorassan, who are not handsome in build, and not remarkable for the agility of their movements; besides, feet with ugly, narrow, and very sensitive hoofs, disfigure these horses.

Lastly, we meet yet another breed, the *yorga*, among the Turkomans, of middle size, stumpy, with a long and thick mane, and famed for its trotting powers; it is trained to amble. These horses are generally brought from Ourgenj, that is, Khiva

and the Kirgiz steppes. The price rises from eight tomans to one hundred.*

The Turkoman camels have a single hump, are of medium size, and are used for the transport of the movables of the nomads; also for the transport of wares sent to Khiva, Bokhara, and, at times, even as far as Orenburg. The sheep have coarse wool. Generally speaking, very little cattle is reared by the Turkomans of the Caspian, but this occupation increases as we leave the shores of this sea.

Manufactures are limited to the production of the coarsest articles, corresponding to the most primitive wants, such as clothes of cotton, wool, or raw silk. The Goklen women principally weave the cotton and silken materials, the Yomouds the woollen. Carpets and felts of various sizes and colours are prepared by all the tribes, and exported in considerable numbers into Persia. Powder, prepared by the Turkomans in considerable quantities, is of very bad quality. They obtain the saltpetre in Astrabad and the sulphur in the neighbourhood of the Kara Bougaz—at the Well of Kougourt.

In consequence of the everlasting dissensions and enmities between the different tribes, trade is very little developed. A caravan trade is carried

* 1 toman = 3 roubles = 9 shillings.

on by the Yomouds between Astrabad and Khiva, also goods are forwarded between Meshed and Bokhara, through a steppe where the Tekké, the most predatory tribe of all, roam. The chief articles of export from the steppe into Khiva, and thence to Bokhara, are: slaves, horses, camels, goats, carpets, felt, and articles of equipment. Only the slaves are sold for cash; the remaining wares are bartered. The trade between Khiva and Bokhara consists in wheat, lamb-skins, Russian goods, and metal and cotton wares. The eastern Turkomans carry on an insignificant trade in furs with the independent countries on the Upper Amou and with Afghanistan. We may consider the town of Mehman the centre of this trade. The neighbouring Turkomans bring horses, camels, and rams into Persia; also they export carpets, salt, and naphtha, and in exchange purchase arms, wood, gunpowder, colours, and fruits. They trade with Russia at Ashourada, also in the island of Cheleken, and Fort Alexandrovsk. At the first two places they sell naphtha and salt, and at the latter fish, buying in exchange corn, iron, cast-iron pots, fishing-tackle, sugar, tea, &c.

Almost every Turkoman who lives near the sea has a boat for fishing and trade; their number amounts to five hundred; some of them carry from six hundred to twelve hundred pouds of cargo.

The boats are in general of three sorts: the *kizboy*, a vessel with one mast and two sails, serving for the transport of cargo; the *kakhoss*, with one sail, and used for piratical purposes; and the *telmil*, or ordinary passage-boat.

CHAPTER III.

The Turkoman Type.—Men, Women, and Children.—Their Clothing and Ornaments.—Food.—Female Labour.—Religion and Superstition.—Weddings, Funerals, and Festivals.—Incursions and Return with Prisoners.—Cruelty.—Ashourada.—Present Situation of Russia in the Steppe.

IN entering on a description of the interior life of the Turkomans, their manners and customs, we place especial reliance on Blocville, who, having passed fourteen months in captivity amongst the tribe Tekké, had opportunities of making himself closely acquainted with their manners and character.

The most usual Turkoman type may be thus described: stature above that which we call middle, and the remainder of the body corresponding. Although his muscular development is not very great, he is generally powerful, and remarkable for his strong make, which endures much fatigue and physical privation. His skin is white, face round, cheek-bones prominent, forehead broad, and skull round, with powerfully developed bones. His small,

sunken, almond-like eyes are almost without eyelashes, and are remarkable for fire and intelligence; his nose is generally small and turned up, teeth pretty strong, and chin small. To all this add small whiskers and a sparse beard covering the cheeks and chin. His ears are large and quite projecting, and the habit of tucking the hair behind them makes this deformity still more apparent, so that if you look at a Turkoman in front, his ears are as visible as other people's are when viewed in profile. Their dress consists of wide trousers, fastened round the hips and reaching to the ground, and of a shirt without collar and with a slit down the right side as far as the waist. Above this shirt, which covers the trousers as far as the thighs, they put on one or two large dressing-gowns, with a woollen or cotton girdle below the chest, and with long, loose sleeves, which remind one of the French sleeves *à gigot* formerly in fashion. The shaven poll of the Turkoman is covered by a skull-cap, and then by the *talbak*, a sort of truncated cone, made of sheepskin. Instead of boots, they wear a sort of slipper, or content themselves with a simple sole of camel or horse's skin, tied to the foot by woollen strings.

In winter, and when riding on horseback, both men and women wear boots, having previously wound something similar to flannel round half the

foot, and attached the trousers to it; above this they put on flexible, but tolerably stout felt boots, and over these other boots of Russian leather, reaching above the knees. These boots, with narrow, high heels, and with an iron plate not thicker than a franc piece soldered to the heel, have the seams inside, and, if they are smeared with grease, become quite waterproof. A knife, or sort of sabre, invariably hangs, attached by a string or strap, from the Turkoman's side.

The women present more clearly defined characteristics than the men. The cheekbones of the women are more prominent; their skin is extremely white, notwithstanding their extreme uncleanliness. Their hair is generally very thick, but at the same time very short, so that they lengthen their tresses by the aid of locks of goat's hair (false hair is unknown to them), to which they attach beads and pieces of silver. Their attire consists of trousers fitting closely to the hips, and of a loose shirt reaching to the thighs; the part near the bosom is usually adorned with rows of small oval pieces of silver money, set with cornelians. They also wear gowns similar to those of the men, but much shorter; married women sometimes tie a girdle round the waist, above the shirt.

The Turkoman women part their front hair on

both temples, letting it fall below the chin; their remaining tresses they plait into two locks, which descend below the waist. Their heads are protected by a round cap, to which they tie a silken or woollen veil, which descends behind to their very heels; all this is sustained by a species of turban, three fingers in breadth, and set with silver plates. This fillet is fastened behind by a simple knot. One end of the veil is brought round the chin, from right to left, and fastened on the left side of the head by means of a small chain with a hook According to circumstances, the Turkoman women elevate this extremity to the height of the chin, as the Armenian women do. Their ear-rings have a triangular form, and are made of silver, adorned with arabesques in gold, in the midst of which are set cornelians. From the base of the triangle hang small chains, with rhombic plates of silver at the ends; at the summit, a small chain is attached to the hook, like a fishing-line, which again is tied to the upper part of the head, and serves to relieve the ear, which is not in a condition to endure the weight of similar ear-rings, often amounting to as much as seven or eight English ounces.

Their bracelets, which are generally oval, are from two to three fingers in thickness. These bracelets usually weigh from ten to twelve English ounces. Like the ear-rings, and everything used as

an ornament by the Turkoman women, they are made of silver, with golden scrolls and cornelians inlaid.

The necklace of the Turkoman women has also its well-defined shape, varying, however, according to its costliness. It consists of a row of plates, moving freely round the neck, and fastened at the side by a clasp; from this hangs a rhombic figure, as large as the wrist, divided into squares, and inlaid with round or square cornelians. Its costliness is increased by chains with plates of silver hanging from the ends, so that the whole necklace sometimes weighs a pound and a half and more. A sort of casket hangs from a leathern girdle, covered with small silver plates; this is for the preservation of amulets, talismans, or texts from the Koran. This casket is in the shape of an inverted triangle, notched with teeth; it also is made of silver, ornamented with gold and cornelians, and weighs about a pound. Lastly, a round, indented plate hangs from the waist, and weighs about eight ounces.

The tiara, which the matrons wear on the occasion of solemn ceremonies, such as weddings, &c., is a head-dress about sixteen inches in height. It is made of leather, and covered with cloth or some red material, from which hang chains of silver and gold, with little rhombic plates at the ends. The balls and sharp-pointed plates disposed round the

top make the tiara look something like a crown. A yellow or green silken veil, which falls on the back and is embroidered with brilliant silks, is fastened to the two ends of it. The women are ordinarily employed two or three months in making one of them. When they go out-of-doors they cover themselves with such a veil, or with one less carefully made, and pass a capuchin hood, which hangs behind with the veil, over the head. Yellow, red, or crimson is the prevailing colour in all these habiliments. When a party of these women go in company for water, the tinkling of the plates which cover them recalls somewhat the sound of the bells of an Eastern caravan. One often meets women, disgusting from their filth, covered with rags, having nothing wherewith to cover themselves at night, and whose sole riches consist in a bag of flour for the nourishment of their families, and yet wearing various ornaments in the shape of ear-rings, necklaces, &c., which they do not even remove when going to rest at night. They can make up their minds to pawn them only in cases of dire necessity, and then only by compulsion of the men.

The men, excepting the young people, do not wear ornaments. The latter adorn themselves sometimes with cornelian in the shape of brooches for buckling the collar of the shirt.

The children, both in winter and summer, run about in a single cotton or silk shirt, adorned with silver plates and other valuables, according to the condition of the parents. The boys are usually completely shaved; only on the sides and crown are left little tufts of hair, which they sometimes plait into pigtails and tuck behind the ears. The head is usually covered with an embroidered cap, with a plate in the middle, upon which is fastened a little cylinder to hold a tuft of feathers. Chains hang from this plate, and to their extremities are fastened plates of the same metal. The boys wear this headdress till the age of ten years.

The girls are clothed in almost the same style as the boys, except that their shirts reach to the heels. They also are shaved, and they leave them only two tufts of hair on the temples, and one on the crown, which falls down on the neck; but at the age of twelve they cease to shave them. Their head-dress is distinguishable from that of the boys by the strings, with buttons of black silk or wool, which hang from the cap, and fall on the back and shoulders. They wear this sort of head-dress until the age of from fifteen to seventeen.

The Turkoman race is very mixed. A number of prisoners from neighbouring States, such as Afghans, Persians, &c., having become habituated to their mode of life, have married Turkoman

wives, and, so to speak, become citizens of this community; besides which, the Turkomans are constantly bringing into their midst foreign women from Bokhara, Herat, and other Persian localities, whence they carry off women during their incursions.

In any case, the type of the true Turkoman is marked by such sharply-defined peculiarities that, at the first glance, you may distinguish him from the man with an admixture of foreign blood.

The abode of the rich and of the poor Turkoman is identical in its situation and surroundings, but that of the rich man is better kept. The erection of a new tent is the occasion of solemn festivities. Some time before the opening of the tent the Turkoman gives information of it to his friends and neighbours, who appear on the appointed day as guests.

The tent is opened before they cover it with felt. They place in it carpets, various articles of furniture, sacks of provisions, and certain pieces of woollen or silken material of various colours, to which they fasten feathers, and which they place as high as can be reached with the hand by jumping.

When the guests are assembled, the whole company enters into the new tent, whilst every one makes his remarks on its good qualities or deficiencies, whilst the most skilful employ themselves

in attempting to reach the pieces of stuff hanging above. They then exercise themselves in personal encounters, riding, shooting with guns and pistols, the latter aiming at a mark at full gallop. This concluded, the guests assemble for the repast. On these solemn occasions the host cooks a sheep, and prepares rice for his guests. The banquet generally concludes with tea-drinking, a pipe, and music, which plays in the newly-opened habitation. The host himself generally remains in the centre near the fire, placing himself opposite the entrance. On entering, the women arrange themselves on the right, and the men on the left, or on the right of the place occupied by the host. A stout thong, passed through the circle which forms the key of the vault of this structure, and descending inside the distance of the height of a man, serves to strengthen the exterior roof, which is sometimes shaken by storms. A sack of flour, or some other heavy article, is attached to this thong; for the wind in these parts sometimes blows with such violence that they are obliged to take the felt from the roof.

Almost all Turkomans feed in the same way. In the morning, a morsel of bread with garlic or some sort of soup, according to their means. Almost all of them have a sheep or goat in the vicinity of the tent, which they fatten for special

occasions. Meat is divested of skin, cut into small pieces, and salted; a part of it is dried, and acquires then a peculiar taste, not unlike that of the pheasant, of which the Turkomans are very fond; the rest is cut up into small pieces, destined for the preparation of hot soup. They collect the bones and other remains of the slaughtered animal, and boil them in saucepans, reckoning that the broth thus formed will suffice at the coming feast for all the guests. They give the entrails to the children, who char them on the coals, and then for whole days together suck these hardly-cleansed intestines.

Their soup is thus prepared:—The wife places some fresh or salt meat in the saucepan; its odour soon spreads through the neighbourhood, and attracts to the spot various neighbours, who, distaff in hand, on some pretext or other visit their acquaintance, sit down by the fire-place, and engage her in conversation. Each in turn stirs with a wooden spoon the meat in the saucepan, and afterwards licks off the fat remaining on it. When the meat commences to boil, the mistress of the house takes out some pieces with her hands, and presents them to her guests, concealing, however, the best pieces for herself. She then pours some jugs of water into the saucepan, and sprinkles the remaining morsels with pepper and salt. When it is

completely boiled, the meat is placed upon large wooden plates, on which bread has been previously crumbled. All wash their hands before dinner; but this is done evidently as a matter of form only, for Turkoman hands could not be washed clean by water alone. When the soup is finally ready, the head of the household, having given thanks to God, gives the signal for all present to occupy places round the wooden bowls. The men eat apart from the women and children. First they eat the soup, which, however, is almost entirely absorbed by the pieces of bread thrown into it; then they seize on the bread and meat, and, having consumed it, they scrape up with a spoon, which passes from hand to hand, the remaining moisture from the plates. After dinner, each tries to pick up as much of the food as he can with his hands; nor does he occupy the dinner-hour with interesting conversation, or anything of that sort; for eating among the Turkomans proceeds in a very rapid and methodical manner.

At the conclusion of the repast all lick their hands, and rub them to the end of the fingers, in order that they may be covered with grease on their entire surface; then they wipe their face with their greasy hands, with the object of communicating to it their softness and polish; and lastly, the third operation consists in rubbing the feet or

boots, if they wear boots, with fat. Wherefore, one can, by looking at the boots of a Turkoman, tell at a glance whether he is full or fasting.

When all are sufficiently rubbed with grease, the elders in the centre wash their hands, keeping them even with their countenances, and saying at the same time, "Bvom Allah, al rahman, al raheem, Allah Akber!"* when all present stroke their chins with their hands, the men likewise their beards in their whole length.

The victuals are then placed in a sort of napkin, which is arranged and folded up after the repast, and they provide themselves with a bone, the sucking of which forms their after-dinner distraction. If this windfall happens to be in the hands of the paterfamilias, in such a case, after having sucked it somewhat, he hands it over to his wife, who in her turn gives it to her child, after which it rejoices the heart of the household dog, who has been following with hungry eyes the dainty bone as it passed from hand to hand, and awaiting the moment when he shall dispose of its remains according to his own will and pleasure. After dinner they smoke the *chillem* (water-pipe), resembling the *hookah*. The reservoir of this apparatus is wooden, shaped like the pumpkin-bottle, and is sometimes simply replaced by this latter.

* Praise be to Allah, the merciful and gracious, Allah is great!

In the upper part, where the pipe ought to be, two openings are made; on the first of these they place the teeth to inhale the smoke, and on the second the finger of the hand which holds the apparatus, in order to open or shut this opening, according as they wish to get more or less smoke.

The Turkoman rapidly puffs two or three times, and then, having inhaled in the last mouthful as much as he can, puffs it out, and passes the pipe on to his neighbour. Bending a little forward after this, he remains in a state of ecstasy, or buried in his thoughts. Coming to himself by degrees, he resumes his ordinary position. The tobacco is procured from Bokhara, and is remarkable for its excessive strength. Before smoking it, they crumble it a little in the hand, and then fill the pipe, which is lighted by means of flint and steel or a red-hot coal. The women, with few exceptions, do not smoke, but the men smoke as much as they can, and keep the side-pocket of their shirts constantly crammed with tobacco. Even at night, if the Turkoman suffers from sleeplessness, he arises and lights his pipe. He goes to the tent in which he hopes to find a fire, and nobody pays any attention to him. Sometimes, perhaps, the master asks, "Who is there?" but quietly allows his visitor to seek a light in the cinders of the fire.

At and after dinner also, they use tea to a great extent, drinking it both with and without sugar. Their tea is of two sorts. The black, or ordinary tea, is in cakes, and before making the infusion these are broken up into pieces. The green aromatic tea is remarkable for its great strength. The immoderate use of tea produces at a certain age convulsive fits. Many use a snuff composed of grass dried, reduced to powder, and mixed with tobacco and a few drops of sesamum oil, which gives it a greenish tinge, and aids the manufacture of the mixture.

Let us return, however, to the Turkoman dinner. They often exchange the above soup for one made of small, round, hard beans, cooked with flour, sour milk, and salt and pepper. The soup is sometimes made with bread or paste. When the weather does not favour the heating of the stove, they cut slices of bread, place pieces of minced meat between, and cook them on the fire, placed on kindled logs of wood.

Rice is reckoned a luxury by the Turkomans. They prepare it with meat, sesamum oil, cut-up carrots, pepper, salt, and water. Sheep's trotters, boiled in oil, likewise belong to the dishes of which they are fond.

In ordinary times their food consists of bread, garlic, sour milk, pumpkins, parsneps, and melons.

Camel's milk is fermented in jars or jugs, and becomes a light-bluish colour, acid, like a lemon, and disagreeable in taste and smell. It is intoxicating. This is the only fermented liquor used by the Turkomans.

Sheep's skin, if it is not wanted for any other purpose, is also used for food. They put it aside for some days that it may acquire the taste of pheasant; after which it is easily divested of wool. After the completion of this operation, and without the slightest further preparation, they cut off strips, and throw one on to the embers. When it is but a little charred (they cannot leave it long on the fire, lest it should lose its fat) they consume it, masticating it not without considerable effort.

The women enjoy greater consideration than among other Mussulmans. Nevertheless, they have much labour to perform. Every day, amongst other things, they have to grind the corn for the use of the family. Besides this, they spin silk, wool, and cotton; they weave, sew, knead felt, mount on the roof of the tent and descend again,* go for water, *sometimes* wash, dye silk, and make carpets. The latter operation is carried out thus: in good weather they fix in the open air a simple apparatus, consisting of four stakes firmly fixed in the ground, and begin to weave with the assistance

* Probably to arrange the felt covering of the tent.—*Translator.*

of two large transoms, on which the woof is fastened. They compress their carpets by means of an iron instrument, which consists of five or six sleepers or joists disposed like a comb; they are usually three yards in length and one and a half in breadth, and are well made and stout.

Each family has its peculiar pattern, which is handed down from generation to generation, from mother to daughter. The Turkoman women must possess very strong constitutions to endure all the work imposed on them, whilst at the same time they frequently suckle children at the breast, and have only bread to eat, or a soup affording very little nourishment. What particularly exhausts them, and at the same time acts injuriously on the chest, is grinding corn. During the rare minutes of rest, they always have with them a bundle of wool, camel's hair, or silk tow, which they twist, all the while conversing with their neighbours; they never sit with folded hands, like the Mussulman women in other eastern countries.

The men have also their appointed duties. They till the land, tend the domestic animals, and from time to time execute forays for booty. They prepare sheep-skins, cut out and sew the harness for their camels and horses, even attempt to carry on a little trade, and in their leisure moments make head-dresses and shoes, play on a

two-stringed musical instrument, sing, drink tea, and smoke.

It is impossible to pass over in silence the strong desire displayed by this race for the acquisition of knowledge, and their anxiety to read those books which by chance fall into their hands. Generally the children are not taken for work till the age of ten or twelve, and up to this time the parents cause them to be instructed in reading and writing. If the Turkoman finds their aid necessary during the summer, he takes good care that they shall make up the lost time in the winter. The schoolmaster, moolla (*i.e.*, priest or scholar), is contented with very small remuneration for his labours: rye, garlic, fruits, and other things, according to the condition of the pupil's parents. Each pupil provides himself with a tablet, on which the moolla writes the alphabet or a lesson; as the pupil commits this lesson to memory, the moolla rubs it out from the tablet. Before going to school, the parents themselves question their children, in order to ascertain that they know their lesson well; the women especially pride themselves on knowing how to read. The men often employ whole days in trying to make out the meaning of verses in some book which has come from Khiva or Bokhara, written in a tongue differing somewhat from the Turkoman

dialect. The moollas often pass whole years in the above cities, instructing themselves at the best schools.

These nomads wear amulets, or extracts from the Koran, written by moollas acknowledged as holy, the so-called *shabab*, who are employed in curing the sick by means of texts from the Koran. Amulets are generally sewn up in a three-cornered piece of skin, or are contained between two silver plates; they are then sewn on to the cap, shirt, or some other portion of the dress. Children are generally covered with these amulets. Besides this they often wear, set in silver, a bird's claw, to preserve them from the evil eye. Horses, camels and sheep wear amulets also on the neck; amulets are likewise sewn on to the tent.

The Turkomans likewise organize yearly a religious festival, called the *Khuda Yol* (God's Road), to glorify God and invoke his blessing on their families and cattle, in order that this may preserve them from diseases, and that the Lord may lend his assistance in all their enterprises, especially in their forays, as they are directed principally against infidels.

Every one prepares on this day an entertainment proportionate to his means. In a wealthy family from ten to fifteen sheep are cooked, and friends and neighbours are invited to assist in the

kitchen. They collect from all parts for the solemn festivity plates, saucepans, and other cooking utensils. The saucepans are placed in a row, and handed over to the care of the best cooks; the remainder occupy themselves with the preparation of the meat and bread. The women, on the other hand, prepare paste, cut into strips and boiled in sesamum oil. Before the tent of Amphitryon are stretched carpets, and the host himself, with all his relations, exerts himself to see that all have a share in his feast. Guests assemble on this day from all sides, and hardly have a sufficient number seated themselves on a carpet than people, specially sent for the purpose, inform the servants placed in charge of the dishes and saucepans how many portions of soup and rice are requisite. Immediately the victuals are brought into the tent they are approached by groups of from four to six men, according to the number of portions indicated on the platters by means of pieces of bread stewed in oil. Meanwhile the eldest of those seated on one carpet turns to those surrounding him with a speech, in which he invokes the blessing of Heaven on the giver of the repast. Having eaten everything on the plate, all rub the hands, face, and boots with grease, and then, having thanked the host, the group passes on and makes room for other guests.

When a Turkoman perceives any precious object of gold or silver, he invariably turns it over in his hands and applies it to his eyes, expressing a desire that he or his family may possess such an object. The women, in particular, cannot go about without touching everything which attracts their attention. For instance, if a newly married woman espies a handsome child, she immediately touches it, embraces it, and passes her fingers along its body and face, fully convinced that such contact exerts a physical influence.

Every Turkoman knows how to tell fortunes, and he does this in the following manner. Having seated himself before a little heap of sand, and tucked up his sleeves to the elbow, he rubs them with sand as if with water, and passes them over the head, face, and neck, down to the breast. Then he forms a round or flat heap of sand, and draws on it as many lines with his finger as there are letters in the alphabet. After this operation, he presents three small bundles of hay to the person whose fortune he is telling, and requests him to place them on three of the lines drawn on the sand. Having taken therefore one of the lines, no matter which, as a point of departure, he continues counting to the last one, and according as the bundles of straw are distant from or close to certain letters, he gives a favourable or un-

favourable reply regarding the matter on which he is consulted.

Notwithstanding the gravity of his exterior, and the complete dignity of his deportment, the Turkoman is in reality gay, careless, and capable of fun; in these moments he forgets his evil propensities for theft and stinginess, and appears quite generous. In general he is courageous and acute. Unfortunately, his propensities for larceny form evidently a rooted and ineffaceable trait in his character. The child robs his mother, the wife her husband, the brother his sister; but all this is carried on in the bosom of the family, because all guard their goods strictly against a stranger. Add to this, that a man taken in the act of robbery in a strange tent appears to be at the entire disposal of his captor, and acknowledges himself as entirely dishonoured in his family.

If they have to consider jointly any interests in common, and fail to come to an agreement, they have recourse to the elders or moollas.

When the matter concerns treaties between Turkomans, it becomes quite interminable, and takes up sometimes two, or even three months; but when once the treaty is concluded on both sides, its terms are carried out very honourably. This rule, however, cannot be extended to their dealing with foreigners and prisoners. Never-

theless, the Turkomans esteem honour and truth. "If the glory of the European rises as high as the belt," say they, "the glory of the Turkoman is elevated to the beard."

They love their fellows, and willingly sacrifice whatever is necessary for their wants. They behave themselves with more decency and propriety than any other of the neighbouring peoples, including those of Khiva and Bokhara, whose morals have become corrupted to a shocking degree.

Quarrels and scandals of any sort are of rare occurrence among the Turkomans. "I have sometimes happened to be present," says Blocville, "at very lively disputes, but I never heard them make use of a coarse expression or an indecent word, with which other peoples are so voluble." They behave more gently to the women than do the Persians, take more care of them, and entertain more respect for them. Amongst strangers, the Turkoman women cover the lower part of the face with the end of the veil, and speak in a low tone of voice; this does not, however, prevent visitors from bowing to the women in the room, and behaving respectfully to them. The Turkoman women converse freely with strange men, and no one thinks this improper; in general they are completely at liberty to visit other families, and

can traverse long and desolate roads without the least danger of insult.

On entering a strange tent the Turkoman observes rules anciently established and invariable. Having lifted the curtain of the door, he enters in a somewhat stooping position, pauses for a moment, and then rises to his full height again; observing silence for a few seconds, with his eyes on the ceiling all the time, probably that the women may have time to veil their chins, he then salutes the host, still remaining quite motionless. After the exchange of compliments and mutual inquiries regarding the health of friends and relations, the host indicates to his guest a seat on the carpet by himself, whilst the hostess brings bread and a napkin, then bread and water, or sour milk, or fruit; meanwhile the guest scarcely tastes what is placed before him.

The Turkoman girls do not become marriageable till the age of sixteen or seventeen years. Up to that time the parents endeavour to relieve their daughters from excessive labour, in order to preserve their freshness and beauty, thanks to which they will be in a position to demand from the future bridegroom the highest price the latter is in a position to give for a bride. And, as in this nomad race the women do not cover their faces, it is not difficult to choose a bride from amongst

them. Having made his selection, the Turkoman entrusts to a kinswoman or friend of the bride the task of proposing in his name to her parents, and of settling the price.

For a well-made, handsome, and healthy girl they pay usually from 100 to 160 tomans (from £186 to £278); for an ordinary girl they pay from 60 to 80 tomans; for one who squints, or is deaf, or dumb, or disfigured by small-pox, they do not pay more than 15 or 20 tomans. The same prices are given for a handsome female slave. The children of the latter are not recognised as on the same footing with the children of the same father and a free woman, and in the distribution of the inheritance they receive a lesser portion.

After the conclusion of the contract by the mediators, and the acceptance of the terms by both parties, a moolla is summoned, who composes a written contract, and selects a propitious day for the marriage ceremony. The bridegroom sends the bride certain presents, among which sheep for the wedding feast are always found. On the day of the wedding the tent of the bride is decked out with all the available carpets, bags, silk rags, feathers, &c., in the place. The bride is generally brought away at mid-day; if the bridegroom is not in a position to spend much on the wedding,

he brings his bride home at night, and then the wedding takes place without guests.

The bridegroom's mother, sisters, female relations, and friends, adorned with all their available treasures, and with their heads attired for the occasion differently from the usual manner, collect and adorn three or four camels with carpets and variegated pieces of silk. These stuffs, sewn together, cover the head and neck of the animal, and are fastened to the saddle; and thus the procession proceeds for the bride to the tent of her parents.

The men now divide into two groups; one proceeds on foot, as an escort to the women; the other, armed as if for a foray, proceeds in front of the bridal train. At a short distance from the bride's tent they spur on their horses, discharge at full speed guns and pistols, and perform various other evolutions. They then enter the tent, and there, after a conversation of about an hour's length, a sort of strife is entered into between the relations and friends of the bride and those who have come to remove her from the parental roof. The bride generally feigns to refuse to quit her relatives, and when they succeed at last in taking her from the tent, they place her on a carpet spread in front of the tent by those men who had marched on foot in the procession. After this, having seized on the ends of the carpet, these

men hasten to the spot where the camels were left standing. The horsemen cover their flight, firing into the bride's party, who follow the men with the carpet and hurl clods of earth at them; the fugitives, obliged to cover their heads with their clothes, sometimes let go the carpet, or stumble on some inequality of the ground, and fall one on the top of the other.

Having reached the spot where the camels stand, the pursuit ceases. They cause the bride to emerge from the carpet; the women arrange her dress, and cover her head and face with a veil, leaving open only the eyes and nose. Placed in front, amongst the nearest relations of the bridegroom, the young girl proceeds at the head of the cortége. She keeps herself erect, and looks straight before her; when passing near tents, the women around the bride slightly raise her veil, in order to display her to the curious. Just before reaching the bridal tent, the horsemen ride forward and recommence firing, uttering piercing cries. The road is thronged with people, who salute the bride with deafening hurrahs; and at the moment when she prepares to cross the threshold of the bridal abode they place under her feet pieces of pastry for the children; the latter appear in the marriage train, and generally make a terrible uproar.

During this hurly-burly the women lead the bride into the tent of the bridegroom, and place her aside, with her back to the entrance. The females in the vicinity then hasten to visit and congratulate her, but the entrance is barred to the men. These remain in the street, and pass the time till dinner in single combat and racing, both on horseback and on foot. In the evening they smoke, drink tea, and listen to music.

There is yet another original marriage custom, mentioned only by Vambéry. This ceremony consists in the bride, enveloped from head to foot in a veil or silk handkerchief, racing on horseback with her bridegroom; not unfrequently the veiled Amazon reaches the goal sooner than the youth accustomed to galloping and untrammelled in his motions. Sometimes the galloping bride holds on her knees a slaughtered lamb or kid; pursued by the bridegroom and other youths, she has to escape them during the whole race, and not suffer one to approach her, preserving thus her lamb or kid. This pastime is called the "Green Wolf."

The newly married girl remains at home the first fortnight, and occupies herself with needlework, in the society of the female relatives of her husband and their acquaintances. During this period men are admitted to pay their respects. After this the female relatives of the husband

lead the bride away to her parents, with whom she lives for a year or eighteen months after her wedding. Here she employs herself in making carpets, sacks, linen, &c., for her future household, whilst the husband is permitted to visit her clandestinely from time to time. During all this time the parents are responsible for the conduct of their daughter. After the lapse of the appointed time, the female relatives of her husband come to fetch her, and she goes to him on an ornamented camel, and leaves him no more. On this occasion another, and exclusively family festival, is held. Among the poorer Turkomans the marriage ceremony is much shorter, and the woman cohabits with her husband earlier; only when the bridegroom has not paid in full for his bride, but has merely given a deposit, does the girl remain with her parents till he finally settles with them. If the payment is delayed too long, the parents sell their daughter to another. If, however, a girl succeeds in escaping from the parental tutelage to her husband, she remains with the latter, and the former have no right to demand her restitution on any pretext.

Like other Mussulmans, the Turkomans may marry several wives, according to their means. In reality, they should have a separate tent for each wife, but usually two wives are housed in

one tent. "One must be personally acquainted, like myself," says Blocville, "with the details of the domestic life of these unfortunates, in order to form an idea of the life they lead, harassed and poisoned by jealousy. Though their feelings may be in an undeveloped state, yet the heart none the less speaks to them in lively tones."

When a woman expects to be confined, they construct a bed of sand for her, and in order that none should be admitted into the tent at the time, they place a man with a musket at the entrance, whose duty it is to fire at the first signal given him, as the Turkomans believe that the discharge of fire-arms facilitates the birth. On the birth of a daughter the neighbours assemble and congratulate the father and mother of the babe, and they offer the guests on this occasion some pieces of pastry; on the birth of a boy, they affix a piece of white stuff to the door of the hut. They deposit the baby usually in a cradle with fine sand strewn on the bottom.

When a Turkoman dies, he is washed and cleaned according to Mahometan custom, and the body is placed on a carpet in the tent; the women belonging to the family of the deceased range themselves around, and from time to time give utterance to deep sighs. Carpets are spread for the relatives of the deceased at the door of

the tent. On the entrance of a visitor, the women in charge of the corpse pronounce, sobbing, a few words enumerating his merits, in the sense that he was a good husband, father, brother, or son, &c. Each laudation is accompanied by broken sobs, answered by sighs from the men, who sit aside with downcast heads, and cover their faces with their hands or the skirts of their clothes. Having heaved ten or twelve sighs, they resume their ordinary aspect, and offer the visitor tea and pipes, and on the second or third day after death they remove the corpse to the cemetery on a litter covered with a carpet and escorted by a few men only. The nearest relatives march in front, heaving sighs, which are repeated by the remainder. Having arrived at the cemetery and placed the corpse in the tomb, they fix above the head a stake with tatters of various colours attached to the end; sometimes the family of the deceased surround the grave with a small earthen wall.

After the death of a favourite member of the family, female mourners assemble in the tent at the hour of his death during the whole year, and sing plaintive songs, and all the members of the family present join in their refrain. The latter, meanwhile, do not interrupt their ordinary occupations, and it is exceedingly comical to behold

the Turkoman uttering horrible howls, and at the same time cleaning his arms, smoking a pipe, or sitting at table. Even in the adjoining tents the women begin to accompany them, weeping and howling, whilst they occupy themselves all the while in cleansing wool, spinning, and other household labours. Friends and acquaintances of the defunct are also obliged to enter the tent and express their sympathy, although they may have known of his death months ago. In such a case the visitor stations himself in front of the tent, often even at night; and by horrible cries makes known during a quarter of an hour that he is discharging his duty to the departed.

When one of their well-known chiefs, such as deserves the title of *batyr* (brave), dies, they erect a tumulus over his grave. Every true Turkoman must take part in this and add at least seven shovels of earth, so that these tumuli often attain the height of twenty or thirty feet, with a circumference at the base of sixty. In extensive plains especially, these tumuli (*kourgan*) strike the eye; the Turkoman knows them all and the names of those buried beneath them.

They are but little skilled as artizans, nevertheless the native taste and intelligence of this race enables them to improve every opportunity. There are certain artificers in gold and silver

amongst them who manufacture, according to the taste of their countrymen, ornaments of gold and silver set with cornelians. Their smiths can make shovels, spades, and ploughshares; some of them understand how to repair arms, and can even convert flint locks into percussion. Their cobblers make very fair boots, and their boots, with the seams inside, are literally impermeable to water. Other workmen are employed in dressing sheep-skins and making pelisses for the winter. Almost every Turkoman can sing, and play on a sort of two-stringed instrument, and their love for music is so strong that, even in the season of severest cold, when they hear music in a tent, and cannot elbow their way in on account of the crowd inside, they lie or sit around it, wrapped in fur pelisses, as long as the music lasts. The only instrument known to them resembles the mandoline; but the shaft is somewhat longer. The oval body of the instrument is generally made of mulberry wood, and on its surface, speckled with little holes, and forming as it were the heart of the instrument, is placed the bridge, on which two strings of twisted silk are stretched. The tone of this instrument is soft and tender.

The Turkomans, unlike the Persians, use the chest voice in singing, and compress the larynx in such a manner as to maintain the throat-sound

throughout. When they have completed the couplet they prolong the sound indefinitely, softening and modulating it and quickening the time at the end. The instrumental playing and singing is accompanied by changes in the expression of the musician's countenance, by various gestures and incredible grimaces.

The *barshi* (musician by profession), has his peculiar attire and affectations. He aims at a more *negligé* style than others; he dresses his beard after his own fancy, clothes himself in a more *recherché* and cleanly manner, and wears a *talbak*, or head-dress, of the latest fashion; his boots are most exquisite. Wherever he appears he is received with open arms. It is he that first has tea and a pipe offered him; in one word, he occupies the first place. Although he is very well paid he makes himself sought for, and has not always the time, so he says, to accept an invitation. If he is required on any occasion, it is not sufficient merely to inform him of the circumstance. Two or three horsemen generally present themselves to him and pray him to do them the honour of passing the evening with them. They offer him a steed to carry him there and back, and insinuate that he will receive presents proportionate to his talents. Appearing on the day of invitation, the *barshi* ever seems some-

what distraught. He keeps every one waiting for dinner, and after dinner he begins to complain of something; he feels unwell or desires to take a nap, whilst all emulate in pleasing him and looking after him; they make the very strongest and sweetest tea for him and await with trepidation the moment of his awakening. When he awakes, he goes to work, and makes some one help him in getting ready his silken strings.

Having strung his instrument, the *barshi* begins to tune it, and strikes a few preliminary notes with the other musician, whose business it is, however, merely to accompany the *virtuoso* present. Having accomplished all this, the two performers place themselves face to face with the knees touching, and begin singing, amid the profound attention of the audience. These enthusiastically await but the completion of the couplet to burst into loud plaudits and expressions of approval. In the course of the evening the artists become gradually inspired; they are no more to be restrained, but the host permits momentary interruptions for a mouthful of tea or a whiff of smoke. The affair often ends by the musicians losing their senses in consequence of the constant agitation of the head and entire body; the *séance* lasts often till morning, towards which the per-

formers present a thoroughly helpless aspect; the singer is just able to move his lips and give utterance to hardly audible sounds, expressing by his gestures what he has not the strength to sing. The general enthusiasm reaches its extreme limit at this moment. The host rewards the *barshi* with a present, to which every one adds something. Although the *barshi* looks sideways at what is going on, he continues, nevertheless to sing and play, and if the recompense he has received does not satisfy his expectations, he continues to sing, and declares that he will play and sing unceasingly till morning. Every one knows what this means, and hastens to satisfy the *barshi*, otherwise after a while the neighbours would say, "This man invites musicians to his house, and does not pay them." When the wishes of the *barshi* have been satisfied, he yields finally to the prayers of the company, who pray him to cease his song on account of his extreme exhaustion. With a self-satisfied air the *barshi* ceases to feign delirium and exhaustion, pockets his money, coolly thanks the public, and retires, either to lie down there or depart home.

A remarkably powerful impression is made upon the Turkomans by the song of Mahdoum Kouli, who has the reputation amongst them of a saint. Mahdoum Kouli derived his origin from

the Goklen tribe, and died about ninety years ago. It is related in his fictitious biography that he, never having been at Khiva or Bokhara, mastered all the holy books by inspiration from above alone. Once, sitting on horseback, he slept, and saw himself in Mecca, seated between the prophet and the first caliphs. He looked around with veneration, and espied Omar, the protector of the Turkomans, who called him to his side. Mahdoum Kouli approached Omar, who blessed him, and touched him on the forehead. From that moment Mahdoum Kouli became a poet, and wrote poems treating of horse-breeding, arms, and war. These songs produce such an effect, that frequently the youths who listen to them become indescribably ecstatic; breathing heavily, they cast their caps on the ground and seize their hair, remaining long immovable, as if rooted to the spot.

It is only on the occasion of these musical festivals that the Turkomans spend their money freely. Nearly all the *barshis* are rich, because theirs is the most lucrative occupation amongst the Turkomans.

Story-tellers likewise enjoy much respect amongst the Turkomans, but less than the *barshis*. They read various poems of Khivan or Bokharian composition to the sound of music or narrate

the exploits and victories of the Turkomans in their battles with the Persians.

The Turkomans do not display the slightest inclination for dancing, and, with all their natural inquisitiveness, do not express any desire to view it.

After music and singing, the Turkomans most delight in chess. Their chess-board consists merely of a piece of linen in the shape of a pocket-handkerchief, on which the squares are drawn. Having spread this piece of linen out, they moisten it somewhat; their chessmen are coarsely made of wood. They are so passionately fond of this game that they carry it with them even on their warlike expeditions.

Physicians (*jereh*) are very rare amongst them, because they confide incomparably more in the *moollas*, who pretend to cure the sick with amulets or texts from the Koran. Some of their doctors, who are very ignorant, confine themselves to the use of certain remedies obtained from the Jews, or to blood-letting, which is thus effected. They apply a large horn to the head of the patient, and, instead of a cupping-glass, draw in the skin with the mouth. They then make a few incisions with a bad razor, and, applying the horn to them, they empty it several times.

"In 1861," says Blocville, "I had a violent flux

of blood in the eyes, and suffered extremely therefrom; but notwithstanding this, it was only with the greatest difficulty that they allowed me to be bled, firstly from a fear that I should die from the consequent loss of blood (in which case my purchase-money was lost to the Turkomans), and secondly, because their surgeons were not accustomed to let blood from the hand. I was obliged to resort to threats, and vow I would bleed myself with a knife, saying that in my position life was not of much value to me, but that I preferred death to losing my eyesight. The matter ended by their bringing a *jerch* to bleed me. I showed him the spot where the bleeding should take place. After this he began preparing for the operation, first binding my hands as if he intended putting me in chains; then taking from his casket a piece of sharpened iron somewhat like a nail, he pierced my hand in three different places. The blood gushed from these three incisions and I was prepared to leave it till I was thoroughly exhausted, whilst the Turkomans surrounding me exclaimed now and again, 'Enough! enough! you are killing yourself.'

"I consented at last to staunch the blood, but only on condition that I should be bled again on the following day, to the great disgust of my owner. For a whole month afterwards I could

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not move my hand freely. After the blood-letting the Turkomans counselled me to apply to my eyes an ointment composed of sugar, raisins, opium, and alum. After having prepared two small lumps of this medicament, they applied it to my eyes, which were then bandaged with a handkerchief. At first, as they said to me beforehand, I experienced for the space of ten minutes a violent pain, but shortly afterwards a quantity of extraordinary liquid flowed from my eyes, and I began to feel so much better that I was able to sleep a little that night. I resorted twice to this remedy, which much debilitated my eyes for some days; but afterwards I found myself much better."

Scrofula is much disseminated amongst the Turkomans, as is also the cutaneous disease known to the Persians by the name of leprosy.

The habit of sleeping on the ground, even when it is very raw and cold in the tent, engenders rheumatism, from which every Turkoman suffers more or less; and the women employ themselves amongst other things in relieving the pain, by rubbing the bodies of their husbands. When the pains begin to attack the Turkoman, he lays down on his back and causes his wife and children to rub his body with their feet for a good space of time.

On the occasion of solemn festivals, such as

weddings, births, or the inauguration of a new tent, the men compete in single contests, running and horsemanship. Single contests are organised under the superintendence of one of the elders, who always chooses the most powerful for the strife. The competitors generally seize each other by the loins, and the president rewards the victor with a piece of white or coloured stuff about the size of a handkerchief. Having suspended this symbol of conquest to his girdle, the victor returns to his tent. A man who has overcome several adversaries at a time is proclaimed by the common award of all present a "*pulwan*" (athlete), and he keeps this title for the remainder of his life.

We have spoken of the horses above, so here we shall merely touch upon the manner in which the Turkoman treats his horse.

They shoe their horses only at those times when they are about to make an inroad into territories of Persia or Herat. Ordinarily they confine themselves to paring their hoofs from time to time, as they do not wear away sufficiently on the soft ground. The Persian stories of the Turkomans feeding their horses on sheep's fat belong to the realms of pure fiction. Their foals grow up in a state of complete liberty. They inure them to work betimes, causing them to carry

children, whose weight evidently cannot exhaust them or act unfavourably on their development. They break them in to gallop and walk; but on the march, and especially when traversing long distances, the Turkoman usually rides his horse at a slow trot.

They begin to use their horses for riding purposes on their attaining the age of from two and a half to three years; they feed them on barley, hay, and chopped straw with an admixture of hay and flour. But if a Turkoman intends to inure his horse to long campaigns, he gives him rye, and even wheat, instead of barley and sorgo, or paste made of barley and sorgo. When about to take the field, the Turkoman takes with him only a wallet with a stock of rye, barley, or sorgo for his horse and of bread and flour for himself. The whole provision for man and horse weighs very little, though it often must suffice for a whole month; but whenever a Turkoman espies a little grass, he immediately lets his horse loose to graze.

Horses and men frequently return home fatigued, but rarely sick. Summer and winter the horses live in the open air. In the winter they protect them by a piece of felt, which they tie round the neck, enveloping the chest and descending as low as the knees. Besides this, they excavate holes for them in the winter, which, cleared from

snow, protect the animals from the wind. They clothe them in felt in summer also, as a protection from the burning rays of the sun, placing a sort of hood or cape over the head and chest.

Love of display is manifested in Turkoman saddlery by embroidered straps and several collars, two or three fingers in breadth, which surround the horse's neck. To the latter are attached silver plates, in the form of scales, and cornelians; the latter glitter on the bridle and other parts of the saddlery also.

The Turkomans never sit straight on their horses; they sit obliquely, with the left shoulder inclined to the rear. When riding at speed, they support all the weight of the body on the stirrups, and urge the horse on with a small leathern lash, which is attached to a wooden handle about four inches long. Their horses are taught to make sharp turns at the gallop; but before the rider succeeds in training his horse to this, he gets many a heavy fall.

Horse-races are held only on festive occasions and holidays. The distance run by the competitors never exceeds a verst (1167 yards). Two, three, or at most six, horsemen assemble at the spot from which they are to start, and consume much time in arranging themselves, and taking, as it were, a preliminary gallop. The winner

generally receives from the president of the races a strip of white or coloured cotton stuff, about one or two metres in length, and returns at a canter to the starting-post, holding aloft in his hand the trophy of victory. If he desires to compete again, the prize is attached to his horse's neck; otherwise it is tied to the bridle. They do not allow the same horse to run more than two or three times, in order to avoid fatiguing it uselessly.

The Turkoman is busy with his horse unceasingly. He is passionately attached to him, and may almost be said to be jealous of him. Blocville once saw a Turkoman who, severely wounded, and crawling beside his horse, hamstrung him, preferring to take his horse's life rather than allow him to fall into the hands of an enemy.

The Turkomans generally carry a firelock, which hangs from the left shoulder, butt-end to the rear and muzzle inclined forwards, so as to rest against the left elbow; besides this, a sword and a pistol are stuck in their girdle; some arm themselves with lances instead of firelocks. Those who fight on foot do not wear heavy boots, but merely a sole. They tuck their pantaloons up to the knees, whilst their shirts are pulled up and arranged in the form of a girdle. These do not gird on the sabre round the waist, but carry it

hanging down on the back, so as not to impede motion.

Although the Turkomans do not maintain a well-defined order of battle when in action, yet, nevertheless, they do not fight without skill. Never incurring useless danger, they avoid engaging as long as possible, and generally act by unexpected attacks from ambush. When compelled to repel an attack or defend a position, they utter deafening cries, and, raising a cloud of dust in the air, they advance under its cover. Concealing thus the paucity of their number, they lead the enemy into error, who generally supposes them to be numerous, when in reality there are not more than three or four hundred of them. This ruse generally proves successful against the Persians. After a first repulse, they generally disperse with uncommon rapidity; when successful, they rob, kill, and take prisoners for sale in Khiva. Each tribe chooses a special chieftain, a *sirdar*, whose commands are carried out in war time. Any one can be a *sirdar*, the only condition being that he must be elected by ten or twelve individuals. There are amongst them a certain number of persons who have acquired general notoriety by their skill and courage in warfare.

The *sirdars* proceed thus before an expedition. They make known by means of a crier that they

intend taking the field on such and such a day, and will be ready for the campaign at a spot indicated. According to the reputation of the *sirdar* a more or less numerous troop collects around him, and on the appointed day commences the campaign, not only ignorant of the plans of their leader, but not even knowing in what direction or towards what territory he intends to proceed. In good time the *sirdar* gives the necessary directions for the attack of a caravan, the carrying off of a herd, or an inroad into a village. During these incursions they carry off everything they can lay their hands on, destroying without pity what they cannot take away, and killing all who oppose them. The *sirdar* generally receives a larger share of the booty than the rest. If difficulties arise in the division of the spoil, it is sold, and the money realised by the sale is distributed among the participators in the expedition.

When returning home, they give notice of their approach by shouts and the discharge of muskets; their friends and relations come forth to meet them and inquire regarding the slain, and the relatives of the latter mourn for them a certain time, just as if the deceased lay before their eyes.

A week rarely passes without a troop of Turkomans equipping themselves for an incursion or

returning from one, and rarely do they return without booty.

A foreigner always runs a risk of falling a prey to the Turkomans, especially if he is wealthy. If, for any reason, they cannot pillage a foreigner, it is at all events possible to extract some monies from him by trade, or to demand presents, or, lastly, to rob him on the sly. The Turkomans do not like the Khivese, but they hate and despise the Persians. The hardest lot in servitude and labour is assigned to the Persians, whom the Yomouds, Solars, and Tekké carry off. The Turkomans take them in such numbers every year, that the price of a Persian slave in the bazaar of Khiva does not exceed twenty-five roubles (£4). Still worse is the condition of the captured Persians who fail to find purchasers in Khiva, or whom the Turkomans keep for their own convenience, as slaves in their *aouls* for the performance of the severest labours; they hamstring those whom they employ as shepherds, to prevent their flight.

It is difficult to credit the extent of the cruelty exercised by the Turkomans on their Persian captives. The Persian is much to be pitied who finds himself exposed to the nocturnal attack of these marauders. Rags, which scarcely cover his body, are at once substituted for his garments; his hands and feet are loaded with chains which gall him

severely at the slightest movement, and in the course of several days and weeks he gets nothing but the worst of food. At night, to prevent flight, and even any attempt at it, they place an iron collar round the neck of the prisoner, and fasten it by a chain to a block, which makes every motion known by its rattling.

According to one prisoner, for some days together they gave him nothing but salt-fish instead of bread to eat, whilst at the same time they made him work in a garden under the scorching rays of the sun, and allowed him not a drop of water to drink.

During Vambéry's stay at Gameshtupe, a night never passed without fire-arms being discharged from the sea-shore, announcing the return of pirate vessels with their plunder. It was rare to find a Turkoman tent where there were not two or three Persians loaded with chains.

According to the same author, who was once their captive, nothing is easier than to find a Turkoman who would feign connivance at a prisoner's escape for a certain sum of money paid in advance. But scarcely had the poor wretch departed, when his false abettor would place himself somewhere on the road under some specious pretext, shoot him, or simply attack, rob, and murder him, and then calmly return home as if nothing whatever had occurred.

If a circumspect captive consents to pay his conductor only after having reached a certain spot, the Turkoman departs with his companion to the abode of another tribe, and awaits the crier sent to ascertain whether any one had discovered a runaway with such and such articles, who disappeared on such and such a day. This is all the cunning Turkoman requires. For a suitable recompense, he undertakes to show the hiding-place of the runaway. The bargain completed, they lead the unfortunate creature back, to await the wrath of his indignant master. They then load the captured runaway with two, or sometimes three blocks weighted with lead, besides which they put pieces of wood on them, which grip the foot of the prisoner above the ankle.

In order in some measure to restrain the plundering expeditions and piracies on the Caspian Sea, the Russians have established themselves at Ashourada, a small island lying on the south-eastern shores of the Caspian. This is the Russian naval station for ships destined to ensure the security of navigation on this sea. Without the presence of our war steamers, neither the Russians who have settled on the coast, nor those sailing from Astrakhan would be safe. A merchant vessel has nothing to fear whilst in the open sea, but seldom dares approach the shore unless protected by a war steamer. Since the Russians have established

themselves in these parts, piracy has considerably decreased, but complete security from Turkoman violence is still far from being attained, and for a long time Russians, and more especially Persians, must be exposed to the danger of being thrown into irons. Russian vessels cruise incessantly along the Turkoman waters, and every Turkoman boat, passing from the eastern shore to the southern or Persian, must have a permit for passage. This permit is issued for one year on payment of a certain sum, and at every voyage must be presented at Ashourada; the ship is also visited at this time in order to ascertain that there are no prisoners, arms, or anything else contraband on board. Thanks to these measures, the greater number of Turkoman trading vessels are inscribed on the rolls; a certain number penetrate clandestinely by other routes, but risk being sunk by the Russian cruisers.

Thus the Russian power on the eastern shores of the Caspian, is concentrated at the four following points:—

1. On the peninsula of Mangishlak, at Fort Alexandrovsk.

2. In Krasnovodsk, where there is also a fortification.

3. In Chikishliar, near the mouth of the Attrek.

4. At Ashourada, in the Gulf of Astrabad, where there is even a church.

II.—THE KHANATE OF KHIVA.

CHAPTER I.

Historical Sketch of the Khanate.—Its Relations with Russia.—Campaign of Bekovich Cherkasski.—Expedition of Perovski.—Our Present Relations with Khiva.

MODERN Khiva, the most insignificant of the Central Asian Khanates, was once the most mighty and powerful. The political importance and independence of Khaurezm dates from the eleventh century, *i.e.*, from the time of the fall of the Persian Seljouks. At this period the rulers of Khiva extended their dominion further south. One of them, Allah-ed-din, seized Chinese Turkestan, Samarkand, Bokhara, Balkh, Khorassan, Mazanderan, and only the Kourds and the deep snows saved the Caliph of Bagdad from the victorious arms of the Khivan Khan. Allah-ed-din assumed in his grandeur the title of "God's Shadow on Earth," and his mother, who was his chief adviser and coadjutor, that of "Mistress

of the World." Even Jingiz Khan valued the friendship of the Shah of Khaurezm, until the latter insulted his ambassador. The collision between Khaurezm and Jingiz, apart from the fall of Khiva, had an influence on the destinies of Russia also. Jingiz took the road of Baty in his victorious course; but Chepé and Soubotai, in pursuing Allah-ed-din, penetrated through Northern Persia and the Caucasus into Russia. The dissensions which commenced after the death of Jingiz weakened the Jagatai tribe, of which Khiva formed a part. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Timour once again succeeded in making the middle region of the Amou the centre of an Eastern monarchy. But, in the fifteenth century, one of the progenitors of the Ouzbeks, who lived in the Bolor Mountains, acquainted with the dissensions in Timour's monarchy, collected a number of adherents, and took possession of the country. From that period the Ouzbeks have reigned uninterruptedly in Central Asia.

From the very commencement of the Ouzbek conquest the territory was distributed in appanages; the result of this was, that a number of petty sovereigns was called into existence, the chief of whom was the Ameer of Bokhara. However, on account of the distance of Khiva from the other khanates this suzerainty was quite nominal,

and to such a degree that the Ameers of Bokhara themselves were frequently exposed to attack from the other rulers, and most of all, in the seventeenth century, from the side of Khiva.

One of the Khivan khans, Shaniaz by name, discontented with subjection to Bokhara, despatched an ambassador, in the year 1700, to request the annexation of Khiva to Russia; this received the imperial sanction in the edict of the 30th June, 1700. In 1703, the envoy of the new Khivan Khan, Arab Mohammed, arrived in Russia; by a decree in his name, dated May, 1703, the acknowledgment on the part of Khiva of submission to Russia was confirmed. In 1714, an ambassador from the Khivan Khan arrived in St. Petersburg; the intercourse with him gave rise to the equipment of the expedition of Bekovich, who, on his arrival in Khiva, found another khan there, whose treachery was the cause of the fatal conclusion to the Russian campaign. Up to the latest times there have been only two remarkable military expeditions to Khiva, that of Bekovich Cherkasski and that of Perovski. Both of these deserve attention and a few words of explanation.

The object of the expedition of Prince Bekovich was expounded by Peter in his oukase, to the senate of the 29th of May, 1714. The oukase runs thus:—"To send to Khiva with a complimentary

message to the new khan, Shere Ghazee; thence to proceed to Bokhara, and seek some commercial advantage; but in any case to gather information regarding the town of Irket: how far it may be from the Caspian, and whether any rivers exist leading from it, or its vicinity, into that sea."

Besides this oukase, Peter gave Cherkasski private instructions as to how he was to act in the fulfilment of the task imposed on him. Saltykoff, vayevode of Kazan was commanded to despatch fifteen hundred soldiers to Astrakhan and the Caspian for the use of Cherkasski, to advance him five thousand roubles, and besides, to execute without hesitation all the demands of the prince. Bekovich, on his arrival at Astrakhan, embarked his troops and sailed to Gourief; but approaching winter and the ice, which damaged his ships, compelled him to return. In the following year, 1715, Bekovich sailed along the northern coast of the Caspian, and disembarked at Cape Tiuke Karagan. Here he questioned the Turkomans regarding the ancient bed of the Amou and the dyke which turned aside its current. The Turkomans confirmed the statements of Khoja Nafs; but in order to satisfy himself still further as to their correctness, Bekovich sent two of his suite to accompany Nafs and examine the matter on the

spot. For seventeen days' journey on camels (from thirty to thirty-five versts a day), they found an earthen cliff, and afterwards a valley, which the Turkomans assured them was the former bed of the Amou. For three days they went along the valley, and remarked on both sides the traces of dwellings, towns, and canals for irrigation, confirming the statements of the Turkomans. Khoja Nafs declared that this valley extended quite up to the Caspian Sea, but declined conducting them farther, from fear of the robbers of the steppe. Bekovich returned with the information acquired to Astrakhan, and then sought a personal interview with the Tsar, who was then at Libava. Peter was satisfied with the report of Bekovich, rewarded him with the grade of captain, and sent him again to the Caspian. This time Peter prepared for his envoy an autograph letter of instructions consisting of thirteen articles. He was ordered to construct, near the ancient bed of the Amou, a fort capable of accommodating a thousand men; to survey this bed with care, and attempt to turn the waters of the river again into their former course; also to construct a town near the dyke, but without the knowledge of the Khivese. On arrival at Khiva he was to incline the Khan to fidelity and submission, and promise him hereditary succession; to propose a Russian guard for

him, but only on condition that the Khan himself supported it. Once settled in Khiva, he was to propose to the Khan to send some natives, to whom a couple of Russians should be added, up the Amou to explore the sands. With the assistance of the Khan, he was to send a merchant to India, commanding him to describe his route, and ascertain as far as possible the shortest and most convenient communications between the Caspian and India. From Khiva, to pass on to Bokhara, and endeavour to incline the Khan, if not to submission, at least to amity, and as in Bokhara also the Khan was embarrassed by his subjects, to propose a Russian guard. For the execution of this project Bekovich had a force of four thousand infantry, two thousand Cossacks, and one hundred dragoons assigned him. Kojin, a naval lieutenant, was designated for the journey to India; according to Peter's orders, he was to make his way thither by water. The equipment of the expedition cost more than two hundred thousand roubles, which were charged to the revenues of the Kazan government.

Having completed all preparations for the campaign, Prince Cherkasski sailed from Astrakhan in 1716, directing his course again towards the Gulf of Tiuke Karagan. Having disembarked, Cherkasski sent one envoy to Khiva and another to

Bokhara, and leaving a regiment to construct a fort on this spot, he sailed for Krasnovodsk. Here the troops employed themselves in the construction of another fort. Whilst this was in construction, and Bekovich was employed in the equipment of the expedition for the rest of the campaign, bad news came in from various directions of the tempest which was gathering over his head. Ayuka, the Kalmuck khan, sent an express to the prince, cautioning him against the difficulties of the road to Khiva, in consequence of the insufficiency of fodder and water on the one hand, and the arming of the Khivese on the other. Afterwards, a report was received from our envoy in Khiva, saying that the mission was in confinement, and that the Khan was collecting troops and taking the field against the Russians. The envoy of Bokhara, who had made his way into Russia, bore witness to the same thing. But Bekovich was not to be intimidated. Having collected reinforcements in Astrakhan, he disembarked at Gourief, whence he sent small detachments to strengthen the garrisons of the newly constructed forts, and where he in vain endeavoured to secure the friendship of the Turkomans; the latter observed a strict neutrality, intending in the sequel to take the side which should get the upper hand. In the beginning of June, 1717, Prince Bekovich at last advanced into

the steppe. Leaving to the left the great caravan road to Khiva, the force advanced on the small one, as more convenient for obtaining supplies of forage and water.

On the eighth day the force reached the river Emba, and, after two days more, came to the great caravan road, following which, on the fifteenth day, it entered the Oust-Ourt. Here the road ran near the western shores of the Aral Sea. In seven weeks, having travelled eight hundred versts on this elevated plateau, and one hundred besides, they reached the frontier at Kara-Gach (four days' march from Khiva), where, following the plan of Peter, a fort was to be erected. Here the force, having endured the incredible hardships of the campaign, pitched their camp.

Before reaching the Oust-Ourt Bekovich had sent fresh messengers to the Khan, advising him that he came with peaceful intentions. But these again were arrested by the Khan—who then directed his troops to march against the Russians. These encountered our troops near their position of Kara-Gach. A battle, lasting two days, took place, in which the Khivese were beaten. Seeing the impossibility of contending with the Russians in the open field, the Khan had recourse to treachery. Proposals for peace were actually commenced, and even the preliminaries arranged. After the con-

clusion of the latter in the camp of Bekovich, the Khan invited the Prince into his own camp. Bekovich repaired thither with his suite and escort of seven hundred men. There, according to Eastern custom, presents were exchanged and entertainments took place. The Khan swore to observe inviolably the conditions of peace by kissing the Koran. After this, the Khan moved with his troops towards Khiva, inviting Bekovich to accompany him. On the river Porsoungoun, two days' march from Khiva, the Khan stopped and requested Bekovich to divide his troops into several detachments, for greater convenience in quartering them. Bekovich, not suspecting his design, confidingly separated his force into five parts, which were conducted by the Khan's officers in different directions; but hardly were these at some distance from each other when the Khivese attacked them. Prince Cherkasski was one of the first victims. His head, severed from the body, was at once sent off to the Ameer of Bokhara, who, however, testified disapproval of the villainous proceedings of the Khivan Khan.

The Turkomans, having learnt the destruction of Bekovich's force, began to besiege our forts recently erected on the Caspian Sea. Privation induced a heavy mortality amongst the garrisons, and the commandants resolved to raze the works and retire

to Astrakhan. The remains of the Tiuke Karagan garrison reached this point with the greatest difficulty, but that of Krasnovodsk, having taken ship on the Caspian, was dispersed by a storm, so that but few ever saw Astrakhan.

In this grievous manner did the promising expedition of Prince Cherkasski end.

In consequence of the eternal dissensions in Khiva and its remoteness from Russia, its dependance was but nominal. However, commercial connexions were kept up uninterruptedly, and many Russians visited Khiva.

Since the time of Peter also we have endeavoured to strengthen our influence in Khiva at every convenient opportunity. Thus in 1731 Colonel Herzenberg was sent thither to negotiate; but not only was he refused admittance into the capital, but was even plundered on his return journey.

In 1741 the Khan of the Lesser Horde, Abdoul-Khair, being already known to us, was invited to occupy the throne of Khiva in the place of the Khan Youlbars, murdered by Nadir Shah. Lieutenant Gladysheff, the surveyor Mouravin, and the engineer Nazimoff, entered Khiva with Abdoul-Khair. Mouravin was at once despatched to Nadir's camp with the demand "that he, Nadir Shah, should give up the town of Khiva, for the sake of his Imperial Highness, to Abdoul-Khair,

for that the latter was a good and faithful subject of the Russian Emperor." Nadir, who always entertained great respect for Russia, rewarded the envoy, and agreed to his proposals, merely requesting that Abdoul-Khair should seek a personal interview with him. But the latter, distrusting the Shah, thought it prudent to decamp with his suite and the Russian officers, leaving Khiva at the mercy of Nadir. The Persian conqueror, in proof of the purity of his intentions, rewarded the Russian captives after the occupation of the town, and sent them off to Russia. The Shah, on his departure from Khiva, set one of his officers over the khanate, whom the Khivese quickly slew, and proclaimed as their khan Nour Ali, son of Abdoul-Khair.

In 1770 yet another Russian subject was summoned to the throne of the khanate, viz., the Kirgiz Khan Haib.

Thus in the course of the eighteenth century no less than five khans were Russian subjects—in 1700, Shaniaz; in 1703, Arab Mohammed; in 1741, Abdoul-Khair; after him Nour Ali; and lastly, in 1770, Haib.

In 1793, at the request of the Khan, the learned and observing Doctor Blankenagel was sent by our court to prescribe for the Khan's uncle, Fazil, who was suffering from ophthalmia. On his arrival

in Khiva he found the eyes of the patient incurable, and wished to return at once; but the Khivese detained him, and were irresolute how to act towards him.

The majority of the grandees voted for murdering him after his departure, on the road, in order that he might not relate what he had seen. Being informed by our prisoners of the intended crime, Blankenagel escaped from Khiva and took refuge with the Turkomans, who forwarded him to Mangishlak, whence he sailed to Astrakhan.

Blankenagel wrote a pamphlet on Khiva, in which he described its wealth in the most glowing colours. He thus expresses himself in one part:—"I have shown previously what assurances I gathered regarding the rich and inexhaustible gold and silver mines of Khiva; these great treasures will cost us much less, in respect of working and carriage, than those of Peru cost Spain." Speaking of Central Asian trade, Blankenagel expresses himself in the following manner:—"All these rich branches of trade depend on the possession of Khiva, and ought to be so much the more important to us, in that to gain possession of this new Peru, it is not necessary to arm fleets, despatch large bodies of troops, or expend much blood and treasure. In a word, the possession of Khiva will cost us nothing, and this nothing will procure for

Russia great wealth, and, what is more pleasing (*sic*), tranquillity and peace for the natives." And he then adds: "I dare say, with all confidence, that five thousand men could without difficulty occupy the whole of the Khivan territory."

What lent still further attractions to Blankenagel's narrative was this—his assurance of the feasibility of uniting the Aral and Caspian seas by turning the waters of the Amou into their ancient bed.

In 1819 General Yermoloff, commanding the Caucasian *corps d'armée*, sent Captain Mouravieff, of the general staff, and Major Ponomareff, to reconnoitre the eastern shores of the Caspian. The task assigned them was to select a suitable spot for the construction of a fort, which was at the same time to serve as a warehouse for goods; to proceed afterwards to Khiva, and persuade its khan to direct the trade of his dominions on the spot chosen. Our officers reconnoitred all the southern portion of the eastern shores of the Caspian, and found two points suitable for the erection of a fort—one near Serebrianni Burg, near the *embouchure* of the Giurgen; the other in the Balkhan Gulf. The Yomoud Turkomans inhabiting the shores not only refrained from annoying our agents in the execution of their duty, but even asked to be taken under Russian protection.

Escorted by a few Turkomans of this race, Mouravieff proceeded to Khiva without let or hindrance. But here he was confined without rhyme or reason for the space of forty-eight days, and although he eventually had an interview with the Khan, he failed in persuading him to adopt the propositions of our government, and was soon afterwards removed from Khiva.

On his return, Mouravieff described his travels, and represented in the most vivid colours the wretched condition of the khanate, depicting in sombre hues the painful situation of the Russian captives.

In 1820, in order on the one hand to support our authority, and on the other to render the passage of caravans secure, another mode of action was adopted. It was resolved to send yearly into the steppe detachments of a strength varying according to circumstances. But matters, instead of becoming better, became worse. In 1822 many Turkoman tribes acknowledged the authority of the Khan. War and rapine raged between our Kirgiz and those who were still independent. The kidnapping of our people from the frontier increased tenfold; piracy, on the Caspian especially, took more serious proportions, and inflicted great injury on our fishermen.

At this time new regulations were being intro-

duced for the government of the Kirgiz, and as, for administrative purposes, they were divided in such a manner that the Lesser Horde was under the Orenburg government, and the Middle Horde under the West Siberian, the new regulations for each differed very essentially, because they owed their origin to the views of different officials.

The new statute for the Siberian Kirgiz was issued in 1822, but was not carried into effect till 1824. By this statute the Siberian Kirgiz were divided into two circuits—Karkaralinsk and Kokchetavsk. In the formation of these circuits natural boundaries were observed as much as possible. The circuits were divided into bailiwicks; the eldest *sultans* were to administer the circuits, and to these were appointed *divans*, whose duty it was to restrain their authority.

In 1824 the Orenburgh Kirgiz also received a new organization. The dignity of khan was abolished; the steppe was divided into three sections, from the north-west to the south-east, but the error of not paying attention to the natural division of the soil was committed. The government of each section was confided to an *elder sultan*, whose name was afterwards changed into that of *ruling sultan*. Unlimited authority was bestowed on the sultans, with the right to punish the Kirgiz subject to them for robbery on the

frontier, for which purpose a detachment of two hundred Cossacks was given them. This detachment, which, with the Orenburg sultans, took the place of the divan of the rulers of the Siberian Kirgiz, merely consigned to the former the power of persecuting their personal enemies, but did not secure our frontier in any way, nor establish tranquillity in the steppe.

Our caravans, escorted by considerable detachments, were pillaged as before. Thus, in 1825, a caravan, under the protection of a detachment consisting of 625 men, with two guns, was attacked at the passage of the Yani river by hostile Kirgiz, reinforced by the Khivese. For three days running the caravan defended itself, but finally had to throw away its merchandise, and retire with a loss of 547,600 roubles. The kidnapping of captives from the frontier did not cease. Every year two hundred Russians were captured on the Caspian and sold in the Khivan market. A special fund was held in trust on the frontier for the ransom of our captives, and this in 1826 amounted to 21,289 roubles.

From this it may be seen that, although our relations with Khiva began very early, yet they were never particularly amicable. A constant stream of envoys brought presents from the Khivan Khan into Russia, and declared in his name devotion to Russia, yet the Khivan

Government never let slip an opportunity of robbing a caravan, carrying off Russians into slavery, or stirring up the Kirgiz to revolt.

But the Khivese were not content with simply insulting Russians sent to Khiva by the government; they seized them in the steppe, and detained them in abject slavery. With the assistance of the Kirgiz and Turkomans, they captured our fishermen in crowds on the Caspian, carried people from the very frontier, took them to Khiva, and there, often with the participation of the Khan himself, publicly sold them as slaves. Thus in 1835 it was computed that there were as many as one thousand Russian captives in Khiva.

Since negotiation had failed, it was evidently necessary to take more decided measures. Therefore, in the year 1836, all the Khivan merchants who were returning to Orenburg and Astrakhan from the Nijni Novgorod fair were detained with their merchandise, and the Khan was at the same time informed, that these would not be set free until the Russian captives in Khiva were set at liberty, and all hostile action against us had ceased.

The sudden cessation of commercial relations with Russia inflicted a serious blow on the khanate. The price of all imported manufactures was raised

15 per cent., and the price of raw materials 60 per cent. The value of Khivan productions fell to the extent of 50 per cent.

Notwithstanding this the Khan, Allah Kouli, delayed the execution of our just demands, still imagining that by various artifices he might escape the impending danger.

In 1837, twenty-five Russian captives were sent back with a quantity of presents. This did not, however, influence our conduct. The presents were refused, the detention of the merchants and their goods continued, and our demands were reiterated with still greater persistence. All this was, however, without result.

It became evident that any further delay or hesitation on our part would be looked upon as timidity, and would have the effect of increasing the insolence and audacity of the Khivese. It was therefore resolved to punish them by force of arms, and Perovski received orders to advance with a large force on Khiva.

It was plain that we could boldly rely on the success of the undertaking. It was certain that when, after the attack on our armed caravan in the winter of 1824, a scientific expedition was sent to the Sea of Aral, under the command of Colonel Berg, every preparation was made in Khiva for bringing the keys of the town to the Russians.

Our captives unanimously affirmed that golden keys were cast for the purpose. In addition, since the time of the detention of the Khivan caravans by us, and the cessation of trade, want and poverty had increased. The Khan himself, deprived of his revenues, had begun to levy oppressive taxes on the Turkomans (who had already several times sued for our protection), and on the Kirgiz in the vicinity of Khiva. Lastly, an ancient superstition is current in Khiva and the steppe, that Khiva will fall before the Russian arms when the waters of the Amou shall again reach Old Ourgench, which was long ago abandoned on account of insufficiency of water. And, in fact, the waters of the estuary of the Amou began at this time to swell, inhabitants reappeared at Kounia Ourgench, and the people awaited with dismay the fulfilment of the latter part of the prophecy.

All these circumstances led Perovski to suppose that even the Turkomans and Kirgiz might be able to pillage Khiva before he could reach it.

This expedition was the first extensive undertaking on our part since the unsuccessful campaign of Prince Bekovich Cherkasski in 1717. The immense preparations for it, and its ill-success, depending on causes which could not be counteracted by human activity, deserve attention. But before giving a full description of this unhappy expedi-

tion, it appears proper to us to make the reader acquainted with the country through which our troops had to pass, and which offers much novelty in its steppe-like character.

The Orenburg steppe almost reaches Orenburg itself. The upper and central portions of the Oural River serve as a natural frontier; from this, a thousand versts southwards, to the Elbourz ridge, which divides Persia from Central Asia, stretches a treeless, uniform plain. At first, on the tributaries of the Oural, soil is still found fit for cultivation, and even vegetable mould is found in places; but the more we move south, the more apparent becomes its sterility. Beyond the Emba, sands and salt marshes commence.

All the space occupied by this steppe, computed at 850,000 square versts, presents, with the exception of the Mougojar and Karagai mountains, the appearance of a vast plain, not always, however, of the same nature. The northern part differs materially from the southern, and the isthmus dividing the Aral and Caspian seas has its special character. There are no great rivers in the Kirgiz steppe, except the Oural and Sir, which water its frontiers. Comparatively speaking, there are but few small rivers, and these are very deficient in water, whilst many dry up in the hot weather. Also the water of some rivers is brackish, and

therefore unfit for use. The same may be said of the lakes.

The northern part of the steppe is pleasant enough. Many streams of good water are to be found, and even small lakes of fresh water, or, speaking more correctly, cavities filled with snow-water. Near the banks extend inundated meadows, in which grows feather-grass, the distinctive mark of the fertile soils of the steppe. Forests are even met with in the northern part of the steppe, composed of deciduous trees as well as pines; but the space occupied by them is very insignificant in comparison with the whole steppe.

The southern portion of the steppe has a completely different character from that of the northern. From the tributaries of the Lower Oural, themselves generally brackish, to the Sari Sou (Yellow Water) itself, neither in rivers nor in lakes is fresh water to be found. A small quantity is sometimes found in ravines and gullies, but this is often unfit for use. In the midst of the southern steppes lie sands and salt marshes.

The salt marshes consist of greyish salt mud, and are of two sorts, dry and moist—salt quagmires, formed by the drying up of salt lakes left in places by the sea retreating within its present limits. Some salt marshes dry up in the course of the summer, and form, in such a case, a hard

soil, on which the hoof of a horse leaves no impression. Others, on the contrary, even in the season of the intense heats, still remain impenetrable morasses. Salt marshes are generally quite bare; their shores alone are overgrown with various salt-worts.

The muddiness of the salt marshes and morasses forms a serious obstacle both to the movement of caravans and troops, and to the communication of the Kirgiz amongst themselves. These muddy salt marshes have, like the *toundras*,* a swampy upper surface or crust, but the deeper one goes, the more water there is. The shores are usually firm, but the more the centre is approached the more impassable they become. These salt marshes sometimes extend for twenty versts and more, and are passable in a few places only.

The sandy steppes and hillocks, called by the Kirgiz *koum* (*i.e.*, sand), consist of moving sands, which form mounds and hillocks heaped one above the other. The wind blows and scatters these sands from place to place, wherefore the hillocks are continually changing their aspect and situation. They are known to the Cossacks by the name of *barkhan*. Sands are found in the southern steppe only; in the northern steppes they have

* The name of certain extensive marshy plains in Russia.—*Translator.*

probably been covered by the vegetable mould; at any rate, there are no moving sands in the north.

We divide the sands into two classes—primitive and drift. The former, strengthened by the roots of grasses and small bushes, which are excellent fodder for sheep, horses, and camels, offer many attractions to a nomad race; the latter, having generally a clay subsoil, by their continual motion prevent the roots of plants from taking hold, and have not sufficient density to prevent the store of water which accumulates beneath them from evaporating.

The moving sands of the steppe usually abound in water. It is almost everywhere easy to dig wells in the valleys between the sand-hills, and water generally appears at a few feet from the surface. The flora found in the sands is not very important.

The movement of troops is very difficult in sands of the first class; wheels sink to the very nave, and the feet stick. Movement is pretty easy on sands of the second class.

Sands, as already pointed out, are met with in the southern steppes only. The most remarkable are the following. The northern shore of the Aral Sea is surrounded by sands, which communicate in three branches with the salt-marshes which intervene between the former and the latter. The western, a tolerably extensive

branch, is called the Great Barsouk, and there, both in winter and summer, nomad Kirgiz are to be found. The central one, of which a narrow strip rests on Perovski Bay, is called the Little Barsouk, and offers few conveniences for a nomad life; and lastly, the eastern branch, not far from the river Irgiz or Kara Sou (Black Water), and about thirty versts south of the station Kara Koug, has no general appellation, but is called after the stations in the vicinity. A narrow strip of salt marsh separates these sands from those of Kara Koum (Black Sand), which occupy the entire angle formed by the right bank of the Sir and the eastern shores of the Aral Sea. The low hillocks with which they are covered are overgrown with tamarisk and *saksaoul*; in the valleys, near ditches and wells, good grass is to be found; but near the Aral Sea they become moving and sterile, and, near the Sir, destitute of water. Beyond the river Kouvan are found the immense sandy deserts of Kizil Koum (Red Sand), which separate this river from the territories of Bokhara. The north-eastern portion of the Kara Koum, approaching the spurs of the Oulou Taou, is called Arys Koum.

To render the water of the wells and ditches fit for the use of the troops passing by, it is necessary to cleanse them beforehand by drawing all the

water from them, and extracting a tolerably thick layer of earth, which gradually accumulates, more especially in spring and the rainy season. Besides this, the water turns bad very soon, acquires a bitter taste and bad smell, and changes into a thick red liquid, full of insects, so that even the camels suffer from severe gripes and diarrhœa after drinking it. The cleansing of ditches is not attended by any great difficulties. Rarely is more than one hour necessary; it needs only to open a free course to the spring, and fresh water quickly appears.

The isthmus separating the Aral and Caspian seas consists of the table-land of Oust-Ourt, having an elevation of about six hundred feet above the surface of both seas. The Oust-Ourt is bounded by a steep and precipitous bank, not everywhere passable, and called in the Kirgiz language "Chink." This isthmus offers the appearance of a completely bare steppe, the soil of which consists of saltish loam, with very scant vegetation.

Water is obtained here from a few deep wells formed on the caravan roads, and is sufficiently bad in quality.

However sterile the Kara Koum sands and similar steppes may appear to the eye of a European, from their presenting nothing but scanty grass

and low bushes, they are blooming oases in comparison with that horrible absence of vegetable life and that lifelessness of soil which characterizes the salt-mud plains encountered on leaving the Kara Koum sands in the direction of the Mougojar Mountains. There there is neither food, nor forage, nor fuel; consequently, there is no refuge, either for men or cattle, in any season of the year. In the summer the friable earth, glowing from the rays of the sun, and raked up by the hoofs of horses, fills the atmosphere with clouds of the finest dust; in the autumn, soaked by rain, it turns into a sticky and impassable quagmire. As these muddy plains and salt marshes occupy the greater part of the Trans-Oural steppe, it becomes intelligible how pressed for room the Kirgiz become, with their herds requiring broad pastures, on the comparatively rare grass districts in the summer, and on those plentiful in reeds and bushes during the long and usually severe winter.

Two extremes serve to characterize the nature of the climate of the steppe—violent cold in winter, and violent heat in summer. The cold often descends to 32° F. below zero; but the summer heats are more endurable than near the Caspian Sea, where the air is always damp.

Rain is rare in the steppe, and falls generally in consequence of a storm. In the vicinity of the

mountains it falls more frequently, but still very rarely in comparison with other countries; only in the high and wooded spots of the Ural Range are the rains plentiful and regular; they fall there sometimes for weeks together.

The easterly winds, which are prevalent in the Orenburg country for almost seven-eighths of the year, dry the atmosphere; this wind sometimes veers towards the north and sometimes towards the south. Like the south-east wind it brings fine and clear weather, and in the winter bright frosty weather. The north-west wind is, in the autumn, not unfrequently accompanied by cold and rain, and, in the winter especially, by frost and those snow-storms known by the name of *bouran*, the plague and, not unfrequently, destruction of travellers. It appears that these arise from the fact of the cold north-west wind meeting the warm west or south-west wind, and turning the watery vapours which the latter have given rise to, into snow. The warm snow-storms come from the south-west; the west wind brings heat and thaw.

There is also a so-called *bouran* from below; every snow-whirl is usually begun by it. The wind rises, whirling and driving the snow along the surface of the earth. But this snow-storm is by far less dangerous than the first—the *bouran* from above. It is difficult to conceive to what an extent man,

and even animals, who generally have some instinctive knowledge of locality, lose all power of reflection at the time of a violent *bouran*. People are frozen to death at a few yards from their abodes, sometimes almost in the streets of villages; they are found exhausted and having scarcely stirred from the spot, but having strayed round in a circle. The cattle run with the wind; they run without stopping for a hundred versts, and often hurry, without looking, straight over precipices and the steep banks of rivers, and perish. The Kirgiz of the steppe, who will conduct you as unerringly in a dark night as on a clear day to the desired spot, refuses in decided terms to be your guide during the season of the winter *bouran;* and, if this surprise him on the road, he slips from his horse at once, lies down, intrenches himself, if possible, in the snow, and awaits fair weather. In 1827 the Kirgiz of the Interior Horde lost, during a severe *bouran*, 10,500 camels, 280,500 horses, 75,400 head of cattle, and 1,012,000 sheep, in all to the amount of more than thirteen million roubles. The whole of them rushed off northwards into the government of Saratoff; some fell into ravines and gullies, some perished on the bare steppe, and others were concealed by the inhabitants of the different villages. In 1816 a similar occurrence took place.

In summer it is extremely hot; it scarcely becomes

cooler even at night, and for some weeks together no dew falls.

In the summer season whirlwinds of no great extent are formed. The whirlwind spins round on one spot, carrying with it dust, sand, and dry grass to a considerable height. These whirlwinds, visible to the eye by the uplifted column of dust, dash forward some hundred, or even thousand, paces, and suddenly disappear. Sometimes several pillars arise at no great distance from each other. Their origin is generally accounted for by the supposition of the meeting of two opposite currents of air; but this explanation appears insufficient. In the vicinity of the whirling pillar the atmosphere is quite tranquil. One may approach it quite close and the wind is only audible in the interior of the pillar.

The success of a military expedition to Khiva must be based exclusively on a correct estimate and combination of means for the supply of the troops and horses which accompany it. If a force of three thousand men and twelve guns were to reach Khiva in good condition, this number would be more than enough for the purpose. Even this moderate figure is founded not so much upon the actual requirements of armed force as upon the necessity of constantly sending considerable patrols and convoys in all directions.

Infantry must form the chief element in the composition of the force, as much on account of the insufficiency of forage in the steppe as that the soil of the khanate is one intersected by canals, on which infantry can act most efficiently and cavalry is almost useless. Acting on these considerations, Perovski designated for the expedition three and a half battalions of chosen infantry from the 22nd Division, 22 guns, 4 rocket carriages, and 3 regiments of cavalry; in all, 4,413 rank and file, 2,012 horses, with 10,400 camels.

Having considered the advantages of the various routes, it was decided that that from Orenburg or Iletzkaya Zashchita over the Oust-Ourt was more desirable than the rest, and that the routes through Saraichik and Mangishlak might be advantageously used as a subsidiary line of operations.

Estimating the distance from Orenburg to Khiva by the route selected at 1,250 versts, and allowing twenty-five versts for each march, one might calculate that the force would reach Khiva in fifty marches, of which about eighteen, from Dongoustau to Aibourgir, would be on the Oust-Ourt.

Having thus selected the route, it became necessary to define the organization of the supply department.

Having considered all the circumstances of the case, Perovski came to the conclusion that it would be most convenient to advance from the middle portion of the Orenburg line at the end of March, and to commence the return journey in the beginning of September.

As the expedition to Khiva might last more than six months, it was evident that it could not carry provisions for all this period. It was proposed to take provisions for two months, whilst the remainder must necessarily be collected on the line of march. Wherefore Perovski proposed to establish two stations during the campaign; one at the southern extremity of the Mougojar Mountains, at about three hundred versts from Orenburg, and the other at Dongoustau, at about the same distance from the first post. It would be possible to collect hay at these magazines and transport thither supplies for the troops. It was eventually decided to leave stores at Ak Boulak only.

Independently of these two magazines, Perovski thought it indispensable to assure the supply of his force during their stay in Khiva, whither provisions might be transported from the nearest sea-ports. Although the peninsula of Mangishlak seemed the most suitable for this object, yet the shorter distance between Khiva and Port Novo Alexandrovsk caused this latter point to be selected. It was

intended to despatch 2,500 chetverts* of biscuit, and 250 chetverts of groats to this spot.

The ships with this provision did not reach their destination, owing to contrary winds; two of them returned to Astrakhan, two to Gourieff, one spent the winter in the island of Koulali, and five were frozen up in the sea, and were plundered and burnt by the Kirgiz of Adayeffski.

Meanwhile, provision for the force was collected in vast quantities. Amongst other things, 11,889 chetverts of biscuit, 3,223 of groats, 4,605 of meal, 16,098 of oats, 6,511 pouds of salt, and 4,199 vedros of spirits. The following articles were taken in addition: preserved meats, bacon, dried and fermented cabbage, horse-radish, salt, pepper, vinegar, honey prepared with spices for *sbiten*,† tobacco for the rank and file, dried cheese, which was of much service as a corrective to bad water, and compressed hay. For the supply of meat a contractor was employed, who engaged to drive the cattle behind the column. The purchase and transport of cattle by government would have been disadvantageous, whilst it would have been impossible to maintain a proper supervision over them, so that a great portion might have perished uselessly

* A poud = 36 English pounds.
A chetvert = 46 imperial gallons.
A vedro = 2·7 gallons.

† *Sbiten*—an infusion of honey and spices.

in the steppe. Tents were taken for the sick, and for the prevention of scorbutic diseases the column was ordered to be supplied with various sorts of acid fruits besides the ordinary medicines.

Having collected such vast supplies, it became necessary to think of the means of transport; that which constitutes the greatest obstacle in a steppe campaign. In the steppe, as is well known, the camel is to be preferred to the horse, because he easily endures thirst, is satisfied with but little nourishment, and also that he carries three or four times the load. A peculiar description of long cart, with high wheels, having broad fellies, was constructed for camels broken to harness.

Upon a calculation made, 12,600 camels were required, counting the load of each at from twelve to fifteen pouds.

Two questions still remained, the resolution of which lay not within Perovski's sphere. It was necessary to settle on what footing the khanate was to be occupied, if this were recognised as necessary. In other words, Perovski wished to know how he was to proceed after the occupation of Khiva. Was he to content himself with merely punishing the Khivese, or was he to make permanent arrangements for the future?

The other question was this: how was the force

to act if Khiva, seeing our resolute bearing, should immediately execute all our demands and return, for instance, all the captives before the completion of the campaign?

The personal opinion of Perovski himself was, that the elevation to the throne of the khanate of one of the most reliable of the "ruling sultans," would not be contrary to Asiatic custom, and would secure us against Khiva for the future. As regards the second case, the action of our troops should depend, according to Perovski, upon the position they might occupy when the Khan should fulfil our demands. If he released our prisoners at a time when our forces were in the vicinity of our frontiers, and especially, if they had not yet traversed the waterless deserts, then it would be most advantageous to turn back. In the contrary case, Perovski supposed it would be necessary to reach Khiva and quarter the troops there temporarily, in order to recruit their forces and reinforce their strength.

Such was the original project of Perovski, presented by him to the Special Committee composed of the War Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Governor-General of Orenburg.

This Committee discussed the project of Perovski on the 11th of March, 1839, from two principal points of view;—

1. As to the time most suitable for carrying the plan of Perovski into execution, and

2. As to the necessary means for the successful issue of the expedition.

The expedition to Khiva, as we have already mentioned, had for its object, amongst other things, to renew and strengthen the influence of Russia in Central Asia, which had been weakened by the long impunity of the Khivese, and especially by the constant efforts of the English to extend their influence in those lands, to the prejudice of our commerce and trade. Considering the proposal of Perovski from this point of view, the Committee became convinced of the absolute necessity of a military expedition to Khiva. But, considering the existing state of things in Central Asia, it was thought desirable to defer it till the completion of the English expedition against Dost Mahommed and their evacuation of Afghanistan. This decision was adopted on the following grounds.

It was certain that the expedition of the English to Afghanistan would have as its consequence a fresh accession of influence to their power in Central Asia. But however great the power and influence of England, both would be considerably diminished by our occupation of Khiva, by the liberation of the neighbouring Turkomans and

Kirgiz from the Khivan power, and the protection of Bokhara from pillage and violence.

Besides this, the liberation of some thousands of Persians held captive by the Khivese, and their return to their native land would, without doubt, operate favourably on Persia, and considerably augment our influence in that country.

On the other hand, the expedition of the English against Dost Mahommed, would be a sufficient motive for disregarding all pretensions on their part to regulate our conduct towards Khiva; consequently, it would be more advantageous and useful to defer the proposed expedition until the result of the English expedition to Afghanistan became known. Guided by these considerations, it was resolved:—

1. To commence immediately with all possible despatch the preparations and arrangements for the expedition.

2. To complete the preparations so that temporary magazines should be ready in the autumn of 1839.

3. To leave to the consideration of Perovski all minor details relating to the equipment of the expedition.

4. To keep in strict and impenetrable secrecy the immediate scope of these preparations, and even the object of the temporary magazines

established in the steppe. Secrecy was indispensable for the success of the expedition, and especially to avoid attracting the attention of the English agents, who might impede the expedition. However, the Committee itself evidently doubted the feasibility of keeping secret such extensive preparations, hitherto unheard of in the steppe. In order to mask in a measure the true scope of these preparations, it was resolved to join a scientific expedition to the military, the which was nominated in the year 1839.

5. If, contrary to all expectation, the English still remained in Afghanistan in the spring of 1840, it was proposed, nevertheless, to march on Khiva, as a further postponement of the expedition which had been made ready would have been extremely inconvenient.

6. Touching the question, how Khiva was to be occupied by our troops, and what were to be the consequences of that occupation, it was solved by the very aim and object of the expedition. Nothing but the punishment of the Khivese and the liberation of our captives could secure us in the future against the hostile action of Khiva, or serve to strengthen our influence in Central Asia. So that necessity herself compelled us to avoid making any arrangement which should not procure a solid guarantee for the future. Therefore the replacement of the

Khan by one of the ruling sultans of the steppe, as it did not run counter to Asiatic customs and ideas, would be advantageous to us. This measure also could not excite the English against us, as they had openly declared as one of the objects of their expedition to Afghanistan the deposition of Dost Mahommed and the elevation of Shah Soujah-oul-Moulk. The choice of the individual who should replace the Khivan Khan was left to Perovski.

7. If the Khivese, alarmed by our preparations, should decide to yield to our demands before the force reached Khiva, the other objects of the expedition were so important, that this circumstance could not be suffered to interfere with its progress. Of course, it would be impossible for us to refuse to receive our captives if the Khan sent them; but this would be little. It would be needful to demand from Khiva the payment of all expenses incurred in the equipment of the expedition, and it would also be necessary to name a very early date for the payment of the money.

8. Of 1,698,000 roubles in bank-notes, and 12,000 in ducats, the sum allotted for the expenses of the expedition, 700,000 roubles in notes were ordered to be remitted to Perovski at once. For the preservation of the strictest secrecy, it was resolved not to demand this sum from the imperial treasury, but to leave the War Minister to obtain

the permission of the Emperor that it should be assigned from different sources, whilst at the same time it should be forwarded to Perovski in such a manner that its transmission might remain a secret.

9. To guard against delay and difficulty in carrying out the works and preparations, Perovski was permitted to command every assistance from the local artillery and engineer authorities, who were ordered at this time to execute literally all his demands as if having reference to the scientific expedition.

10. In consequence of the various nature of the requirements of the force, in part quite out of the ordinary, and on account also of the nature of the purchases, to be made almost entirely from wandering half-savage strangers, it was impossible to render accounts of the expenditure of the expedition, either in money or material, according to the ordinary control regulations. Therefore, in the settlement of queries and misunderstandings which might arise in the audit of accounts, the final approval and audit of all accounts was entrusted to Perovski.

The next day, the 12th March, the Report of the Committee was confirmed.

By the end of the summer almost all the provisions, with the exception of those which were to accompany the force, were already collected in the

magazines. The men who composed the garrisons of these fortifications were enjoying perfect health; some of them indeed were suffering from the *ignis persicus*, or Persian plague, but only one, a Bashkir, had died from this complaint. Each fort was provided with garlic, cabbage, wine, and vinegar; in each camping-ground was one doctor and an assistant-surgeon, a double hospital tent, all the necessary apparatus for the construction of baths, and hospital stores for ten beds.

Up to this time all the preparations for the approaching expedition were preserved, as far as possible, in the deepest secrecy. Perovski found it absolutely necessary to obtain the definition of certain questions of detail from the Ministers of War and Foreign Affairs, but, fearing by a brief stay in St. Petersburg to arouse the attention of the diplomatic corps, he decided not to go. He therefore thought of repairing to Moscow and representing his ideas on certain subjects to Count Nesselrode and Chernysheff.

But, notwithstanding all this, the preparations for the expedition could not long remain a secret for the Orenburg district.

Purchases, contracts and preparations, undertaken on a scale hitherto unknown, convinced all that they were not made for an ordinary reconnaissance in the steppe, but for a more im-

portant and prolonged enterprise. On the other hand, the local political relations with our Asiatic neighbours were there so well understood by all, that public opinion, long employed at surmises, drew its own conclusion as to the immediate object of the campaign. To anticipate this, and deceive public opinion, at least in Orenburg, was quite impossible. Notwithstanding the strictness with which the secret was guarded officially, general rumour had long ago betrayed the powers that be.

Our preparations became known to the Khivan government also. In the month of September the Khivan Khan, Allah Kouli, sent us eighty Russian captives. This was clearly the result of the erection of the fort at Choushka Koulski. But the Khivese, whilst publicly manifesting submissiveness, in secret continued their brigandage, and, by means of the Turkomans, extended their piracies over the Caspian Sea, and carried off our fishermen as slaves.

This double-dealing of the Khan had not, however, the slightest influence on our preparations, which were pushed forward until the force finally took the field.

At that time, when the preparations for the expedition were drawing to a close, the political question regarding Khiva was finally discussed. In the original discussions in the month of March

it had been allowed, that the simple punishment of the Khivese and the liberation of our captives would be insufficient as a guarantee for the future against hostile action on the part of Khiva, and also for the augmentation of our influence in Central Asia; that, for the attainment of these ends, it was indispensable to make on the spot some permanent arrangement which should secure us in these respects a firm guarantee for the future.

The best means indeed to this end was the deposition of the reigning khan, Allah Kouli, and the substitution of one of the Kirgiz sultans affected to us in his stead. The choice might have fallen on Bai Mohammed Aichoubakoff, the Sultan of the western part of the Horde, and known to be devoted to us, if he, on the proposition being made him indirectly, had not declined the honour. It was then resolved to leave Perovski to take such measures on the spot as he should find necessary for the welfare of Russia and the attainment of the object of the expedition, which was, to establish an order of things which might serve in the future as a security against conduct hostile to us, and injurious to our trade and commerce, on the part of Khiva.

In any case, it was decided not to liberate Allah Kouli, but to send him into Russia.

In case of the removal of Allah Kouli, and with

him, of his brothers and relations, Perovski was permitted, for the re-establishment of affairs, to remain in Khiva longer than the appointed time; but he was to do this only in the case of extreme necessity, and after minutely considering all the circumstances which might be the results of this step.

In order to obtain a tangible proof of Khiva's good intentions towards us for the future, it was resolved to conclude a treaty, in which it was demanded:—

I. That henceforward all hostilities, both open and secret, on the part of Khiva against Russia should cease, and especially that Khiva should refrain from pillage, and should not retain a single Russian subject in slavery.

II. That Khiva should not extend its authority over the Kirgiz and Turkomans subject to us, nor should she levy taxes on them.

III. That generally, she should not extend her authority over races over whom she has no legal right, but confine herself to her own territories, reaching to certain points, which it would not be devoid of utility to define.

IV. That Khiva should not protect the fugitive Sultan, Kaib Gali, and others like him, nor, by means of these, incite the Kirgiz to rebellion.

V. That caravans should not, upon any pretext whatever, be compelled to pass through Khiva, and that those who might not desire to enter Khivan territory should not be subjected to imposts.

VI. That the forts on the the Sir, lying entirely outside Khivan territory, and merely serving the purpose of oppressing the nomad peoples and passing caravans, should be demolished.

VII. That goods belonging to Russians be not subjected to a three or even fourfold duty, but that both Russian and Khivan merchants should be placed upon a footing of equality among themselves in every respect.

VIII. That it be permitted, as well to Russia as to Khiva, to have

their consuls; that of the first in Khiva, that of the second in Orenburg; besides, that the Russian consul have the right to keep vessels on the Amou without any molestation whatsoever.

Bokhara, then on good terms with us, was informed of our intended expedition to Khiva.

However, notwithstanding every foresight, one item remained, against which prudence was vain and calculation impossible. Nobody could with certainty foresee what was to be expected, from the elements, which have full play in the vast and inhospitable steppe.

In November all the preparations were finished. Perovski received for the campaign the powers of the commander of an independent corps in war time, and fifty Crosses of St. George were placed at his disposal. In addition, Perovski, at his own request, was allowed to despatch short advices to Orenburg, containing information regarding the condition and operation of his forces.

On the 14th November a notification of the causes and objects of the campaign was published. The following were the contents:—

"The Commandant of the Independant Orenburg Corps, Governor-General of Orenburg, on the occasion of his advance with a military force against Khiva, accounts it necessary to notify to the countries entrusted to his care the causes and objects of military action against Khiva.

"For a length of time already the attention of Government has been fixed on the hostile attitude of the Khivan Khanate towards Russia. Adjacent to the steppes of the Kirgiz and Cossacks our subjects,

Khiva has, for a series of years, manifested by constant deeds of audacity her contempt for the power with whom she has ever had commercial relations.

"Trade with Russia would procure for Khiva the indispensable means of existence; the Khivese have ever enjoyed amongst ourselves important rights and privileges equally with the traders of the other Central Asian principalities, and in return for all this Khiva repays us with perfidy. With unexampled audacity she daily destroys the tranquillity of races wandering near her borders, stops their commercial intercourse with other Asiatic nationalities, detains the Bokharian caravans going and returning from Russia, imposes on them an immoderate duty, and compels them by force to enter her territory, where, at her will and in defiance of law, she robs the defenceless traders of a considerable portion of their goods. The insolence of the Khivese extends still further; not only the Bokharian caravans travelling towards Russia, but even Russian caravans cannot traverse the steppe in safety. Thus, a caravan equipped in Orenburg, and consisting of the property of our merchants, was completely sacked by a band of armed malefactors sent by Khiva. Not a single Russian trader can appear in Khiva without danger of losing his life or his liberty.

"These Khivese make frequent inroads on tribes of Kirgiz, distant from our frontier who have submitted to Russia since the time of Abou-l-Khair; they destroy their villages, load them with imposts, incite them against lawful authority, afford an asylum to the mutinous, and lastly, to fill up the cup of their criminal conduct, they openly detain in Khiva a number of Russians, who languish there in oppressive bondage.

"The miserable fate of these unfortunates could not but attract the attention of our Government, which ever considers as its most sacred duty the preservation of tranquillity and the security of its subjects. But the magnanimity with which our Government warned the Khivese of the inevitable consequences of their criminal proceedings was of none effect. They have not accepted the suggestions made them; they have not comprehended the indulgence of Russia for their errors. On the contrary, they dream that their malpractices will remain unpunished. In this presumptuous state of mind they have dared to erect two forts outside their frontiers on the caravan road leading to Bokhara, in order that they may oppress the traders with still greater tyranny and impunity; their criminal expeditions and piracies have

become more frequent, whilst to a still greater extent they persist in their irreconcilable hatred to Russia.

"It becomes us now to adopt measures more conformable to their notions. The last means of bringing them to reason has been tried: the Khivan merchants arriving in Russia have been arrested on the frontier, and as the condition of their release is demanded the immediate liberation of Russian captives, and the cessation of all hostile proceedings. But even this measure has proved ineffectual. After waiting three years, hardly a hundred men have been sent back to Russia, whilst during the spring of the present year, about two hundred fishermen were seized on the Caspian Sea alone.

"At last all means of persuasion have been exhausted. The preservation of the interests of Russia, the security of her commerce, the quietude of her subjects,—everything now demands more energetic, more promising measures; the dignity of the empire itself demands it.

"These just and well-founded considerations have induced His Majesty the Emperor to command a military expedition against Khiva, in order, by force of arms, to secure the rights and interests of Russian subjects for the future, to put an end to pillage and violence, to deliver our captives who languish in Khiva, to inspire a proper esteem for the Russian name, and to strengthen that influence which incontestably belongs to Russia, and which alone can serve as a pledge for the tranquillity of that part of Asia."

Simultaneously with the publication of this manifesto, on the 14th and 15th of November the troops advanced by echelons into the steppe. At the time of departure there was not much cold; on the 21st November there was even a thaw; but during the night of the 22nd the mercury in the thermometer fell suddenly to 13° Fah. below zero, and on the following day to —22° Fah.

Up to the end of November all went well. Although the cold very often reached 40° Fah. below zero, yet the number of sick did not increase

much; the ailments were chiefly catarrhal, with the exception of the Siberian sore, which made its appearance amongst our men in spite of the fearful cold.

During the whole campaign, up to the 19th of November, there were only three days during which the thermometer indicated 10° Fah. above zero at mid-day; on the other hand, during eleven days it stood at from 0 to —13°; twelve days from —13° to —26°; and lastly, for six days, the thermometer indicated from —26° to —40° of cold. During these terrible frosts, the force experienced an exceeding scarcity of fuel. The insignificant quantity of wood in possession of the force was used exclusively for cooking purposes; it was useless to think of bivouac fires. During this month 652 men fell sick, of whom thirty-two died.

As far as Emba the column marched upon deep, porous snow, finding their own way across country. This sort of labour exhausted the men. At the muster of the Kirgiz camels, it became necessary to accept them without close inspection. Even at this period the fifth part of them appeared unfit for continuing the labours of the campaign.

Here Perovski heard of the attack made by the Khivese on the magazine at Ak Boulak, which was however repulsed.

At Emba, Perovski learnt that the provisions

sent to Novo Alexandrovsk in the month of October, and destined to supply the force for two months, had not reached their destination, because the ships (five merchant-vessels and five belonging to Government) had been blocked in by the ice, some in view of the fort, others a hundred versts from Gourieff, whilst two of them returned to Astrakhan.

On receipt of this intelligence the Governor of Astrakhan was at once required to provide 15,000 chetverts of biscuit, with a corresponding quantity of groats, and to despatch part by land and part to Novo Alexandrovsk, at the opening of navigation on the Caspian. In addition, orders were given to the Commandant of Novo Alexandrovsk to adopt measures for landing the cargo of those ships which were blocked in within sight of the fort.

These ships were saved, and their cargoes landed; those which were blocked in by the ice near Gourieff were attacked by the Khivese, and burnt by them.

Apart from dispositions for forwarding supplies to Fort Novo Alexandrovsk, the Military Governor of Astrakhan was directed to afford Perovski all possible assistance; also the Caspian flotilla was enjoined to employ, if need be, every expedient in behoof of the Khivan expedition.

The further advance of the column commenced on the 30th December. However great had been the difficulties of the campaign hitherto, they were insignificant in comparison with those which awaited the force beyond the Emba. Already it was rumoured that the snow was yet deeper further on. Perovski, during the first marches, partly foresaw the difficulties in his way, and wrote on this subject a despatch to the Minister of Foreign Affairs :—

"The march from Emba to the Oust-Ourt, 260 versts, will be trying for the troops; the deep snows render marching difficult and exhaust the camels from want of food. The column which departed four days ago has traversed only twenty versts; result, loss of time, provisions, and camels. I fear I shall be obliged to abandon pontoons, boats, and all my carts. I have received news from Orenburg that the two months' supply of provisions which, according to my instructions, should have been at Novo Alexandrovsk, have not arrived. This circumstance is extremely unfortunate for us. I counted on this supply for my return journey, and even, in case of extremity—that is a heavy loss of camels on the Oust-Ourt—I proposed to wheel round on Novo Alexandrovsk and thence on Khiva.

"Obstacles which no foresight can take account of run counter to the success of the expedition; but we shall advance with complete trust in God and with a firm resolve to carry out the will of the emperor." *

When approaching the Emba, the force was full of confidence that beyond this river, whither the Kirgiz resort in thousands every year for the winter, all would be changed; at least, that the

* Despatch in cipher of the 5th January, 1840.

snow would not be so deep. The reverse was the case. The Kirgiz themselves perished, along with their cattle, from the unwonted cold.

The state of affairs was embarrassing to the last degree. The steppe was buried in snow to the last blade of grass; whilst above the snow, owing to the severe gales and frosts, extraordinary even in the steppe, a crust had formed. Camels and horses sunk through up to their knees, and even bellies, at every step, and bruised their fetlocks and hoofs; the loads were cast away when green forage, even of the most scanty description, had disappeared.

To all this was added the insubordination of the Kirgiz. As far as the Emba Fort the Kirgiz, according to Perovski's report, behaved very well, and cases of desertion were very rare. Meanwhile, at the time when the force was at Emba, a rumour of the approach of the Khivan troops, united with those of Kokan, was spread amongst them. The enemy's spies profited by these circumstances, and tried to agitate the minds of the Kirgiz by the dreadful menaces of the Khivan Khan, and by representing the undoubted numerical superiority of the enemy as compared with our weak column.

The consequence was, that the camel-drivers of the whole column, to the number of three hundred men, at the very moment when the column was departing, positively and unanimously declared

that they would not go farther, but would return home along with their camels. All exhortation was useless. Perovski exhausted verbal persuasion in vain; the Sultan of the Aichouvacks was not more successful than Perovski. The crowd augmented more and more, and with obstreperous cries invited their comrades to join them; the mutiny increased in proportions every moment. The situation of Perovski became extremely dangerous. Our little column was in danger of being abandoned, at a distance of five hundred versts from the frontier, to a death by starvation on the barren steppe. It was necessary to act with resolution, and without wasting a single moment of time. Perovski ordered the crowd, who were being joined by the Kirgiz of the remaining columns, to be surrounded, intimating that all who persisted in their disobedience would be shot. But even this menace did not produce the desired impression on the throng. Some of the more turbulent stepped forward and bluntly declared, that they were prepared for death, but would not advance farther, because their religion forbade it, and that caravans never travel in such frosts. It would have been dangerous to parley further. Perovski at once ordered one of the ringleaders of the mutiny to be shot. But even this did not mend matters. The mutineers continued in the same state of mind, and the spirit

of insubordination was not quelled. Only, indeed, after the execution of a second Kirgiz, and the reiterated assurances of Perovski that every mutineer would be shot in the same manner, did they submit, beg for mercy, and resolve to advance.

The news received on the road were of the most disquieting nature. The inquiries of the Kirgiz and reconnaissances proved that the farther one advanced, the deeper and more impassable became the snows. Such a phenomenon was unexampled in the steppe. The deep snows rendered the movement of the troops extremely slow. Notwithstanding that the force commenced its advance on the 30th December, the rear column, starting from Emba on the 17th January, on the 30th of that month had not reached Ak-Boulak, although the distance does not exceed one hundred and sixty versts. No troops reached Ak-Boulak in less than fifteen days. At the same time, the loss in camels was disproportionately great, and visibly increased from day to day. The snow was so deep, and covered with such a thick icy crust, that the cavalry were hardly able to beat a few paths across country for the camels.* The track had to be cleared in places with shovels. The snow-storms immediately covered the tracks thus cleared, and the troops who followed had to cut their way

* In consequence of the roads having been obliterated by the snow. —*Translator.*

through anew; but this labour was so severe, that the leading horses had to be changed every two or three versts. The camels moved with the greatest difficulty; they constantly stumbled and fell, and many indeed never arose again. Horses and camels harnessed to artillery constantly came to a stand-still, and it became necessary to drag the guns out with the hands, when the men sunk up to their knees in the snow, and were afterwards hardly in a condition to move from the spot. All the forage was covered with hard, compact snow, congealed into one mass. Snow-storms, arresting the advance of the troops, stopped all communication between the various columns for days together, whilst uninterrupted and severe frosts of 13° below zero and more, deprived the men of all power of action, notwithstanding their warm clothing.

The troops left Orenburg with 10,400 camels; at Emba 8,900 were mustered with difficulty; but at Ak-Boulak, the half-way point of the entire journey, only 5,188 head were found fit for carrying their loads. In the last 160 versts alone, 1,200 head had succumbed.

Such was the position in which our force found itself half-way to Khiva. What remained for it to do?

It was calculated that it was hardly possible to carry a full month's provisions on the remaining

five thousand camels, counting the dry forage. But it was impossible to reach the inhabited regions of the khanate in a single month. We do not mention the impossibility of entering the khanate without a supply of provisions, especially in the early spring, when the roads are impassable. To load the camels with provisions for men alone was to destroy both; neither camels nor horses would arrive at their destination, in which case the force would be in the same hopeless and helpless condition.

But let us take the impossible supposition that the force would traverse the second half of the road very much more rapidly than the first—say in forty or fifty days; that the horses could endure this campaign, living on one *garnetz** of corn and no hay, and that the so-called healthy camels be all employed for carrying provisions, and thus successfully reach Khiva.

But even then we should be in just as evil a condition. The force would start from Ak-Boulak with provisions for two months. After forty or fifty days it would enter the Khivan khanate—that is, a hostile country—deficient in corn, with supplies for a few days only, with horses extremely fatigued, and having probably not more

* 1 garnetz = about ⅓ of a peck, or 3 lbs. of oats or 4 of barley, *i.e.*, quarter rations for a horse.

than twelve hundred infantry under arms. With these the force would enter Khiva at the season of floods and bad roads, without the possibility of receiving succour.

What should we gain by this, and what would be the result? All our cavalry would arrive in Khiva on foot, or in such a state that none would be able to act against the enemy, because it would have had to pass through places destitute of forage. Not having supplies with ourselves, and not having in our hands the means of making the inhabitants procure for us all that was necessary for our camels and horses, what a mournful part the victors would have to perform! Having overcome the frightful obstacles of the road, having lost numbers of their comrades and endured all the hardships of a campaign in the steppe, an inglorious death would await them at the very moment when their aim was attained, and when, under other conditions, nought would remain but to cull the fruits of their self-denial and valour.

But if the camels, according to their wont, lost condition till they got green food, and consequently did not reach their destination with their loads, then our force would be left on the Oust-Ourt in the midst of a waterless waste, devoid of vegetation, without the possibility of advancing or retiring. To this must be added, that although up

to that time there had been no mention of the enemy; yet, if the force continued its advance on the Oust-Ourt, and encountered the enemy, its retreat, although caused by circumstances alone, could not take place, because it would then resemble flight from the Khivese.

To persist in a further advance on Khiva would be to injure the service for the sake of gratifying Perovski's vanity; it would be to sacrifice lives uselessly without the slightest hope of success. One thing only remained—to return. On this Perovski decided.

Such were the causes which urgently demanded the retreat of our forces. The troops succumbed without even having seen an enemy on the road; a cruel and irresistible foe dogged their footsteps without mercy; unseen, he destroyed men, horses, and camels by dozens, strewing the naked and inhospitable steppe with their corpses, and burying their remains in whirling drifts of snow. Warlike pictures ever represent in the foreground victories, triumphs, and the laurel wreaths of the victors. The individual unacquainted with war is struck by these attractive features, which in reality are but the result of labour, constancy, and a long series of privations. The Italian campaign of 1796 must, indeed, be more attractive to all than a campaign in the steppe. It is difficult to con-

trovert that. Yonder the rich and luxurious landscapes of Italy, the magnificence of towns, wealth, famous victories and still more famous bulletins; here a savage desert and snowy plain, snow-storms which bury the track but lately beaten out, heaps of frozen bodies of horses and camels, the thermometer 22° below zero, sickness and despair! True, the difference is immense! But the man who studies the military art should follow with equal attention both the Italian campaign of Bonaparte and this great epopee of 1839 and 1840. Such an one will be in a position to estimate and compare the exploits of the soldier who with loud cries rushes forward—assured that forty centuries look down on him from the summits of the Egyptian pyramids, and that illustrious France will applaud him—with those of the soldier who, with no cries or flattering hopes of glory, but obedient to his duty, silently devotes himself to death in the midst of those snowy plains, firmly assured that even his nearest relatives will learn with difficulty that he perished in some campaign or other a very long way off.*

On the 1st February Perovski published the

* The reader will perhaps call to mind, on reading this passage, the beautiful picture of M. Vereschagin, "Forgotten," on view at the Crystal Palace, amongst the Central Asian pictures. It represents a Russian soldier lying dead in the steppe.

order to the troops, announcing their retreat to the frontier:—

"Comrades, 'twill soon be three months since we left the frontier, according to the orders of the Emperor, trusting in God and with a firm resolve to fulfil the commands of the Tsar. For nearly three months have we struggled with incredible difficulties; we have surmounted the obstacles, imposed by an extraordinarily severe winter, tempests and impassable, unprecedented snows, which covered not only our road but every description of forage. We had not even the consolation of encountering the enemy, if we omit the skirmish which merely served to show his insignificance. In spite of labours endured, fresh and courageous men, horses well fed, and supplies in abundance, one thing betrayed us! A considerable number of our camels perished, the remainder lost their strength, and we saw ourselves deprived of our means of carrying the necessary supplies for the remainder of the campaign. However painful it may be to renounce our expected conquest, we must retire for the present within our own borders. There we shall await the further commands of the Emperor; another time we shall be more successful. It is consoling to me to thank you for your untiring zeal, for the readiness and goodwill of every one during all the difficulties endured. Our gracious sovereign and father will recompense you for both."

Having decided to retreat, Perovski did not delude himself with false hopes; he knew that the retreat would not be an easy one.

"Finally, I cannot conceal from your Excellency," he wrote to the Minister of War, "that our retreat will be not less arduous than our advance; the provisions for four months stored at Emba alone assure, in this respect, the existence of the force; but the insufficiency of wood and forage, the deep snows and constant and severe frosts, undoubtedly exercise an injurious influence over the men and cattle, and, on account of the want of camels, the greater part of the force will have to remain at Emba until the ensuing spring."

On the 8th of June the force at length arrived

at Orenburg, having spent eight months in the steppe. During the campaign, 1,054 men of all ranks died; on arrival at Orenburg, 609 sick were passed into the hospitals.

Thus miserably ended, for a time, an enterprise which involved us in immense expense and sacrifice of life; but the matter did not rest there.

The Imperial commands soon arrived for the equipment of another expedition. The affair began to wear a serious aspect, and the Khivese comprehended that they had better make peace. In the summer of 1840 an envoy arrived from Khiva with 418 Russian captives. At the same time the Khan issued a firman which not only strictly forbade the capture of Russian subjects, but even the purchase of them.

The submission of Khiva pacified our Government. It was resolved again to deal with her by diplomacy. Perovski presented proposals for despatching agents in the early spring, not only to Khiva, but to the other Central Asian khanates, to Bokhara and Kokan. From Bokhara a mission was to direct its course to Kokan. Acting on Perovski's suggestions, the Imperial orders arrived for sending Captain Nikiphoroff to Khiva, and Major Bouteneff to Bokhara.

In Nikiphoroff's instructions for treating, three points were laid down:—1. The abolition of

slavery and of the enslavement of Russians; the security of their persons and property in the khanate. 2. Repression of the illegal influence exercised by Khiva on the nomad tribes long subject to Russia. 3. Security for our trade, both with Khiva and the neighbouring countries.

On the 30th May, 1841, Nikiphoroff left Orenburg with his mission, and reached Khiva on the 9th of August.

Thanks to his independent character, our agent inspired not only respect at Khiva, but also dread. He kept the nobles of the Khan in a state of wholesome terror, but nevertheless the pliancy of the Khan during the conduct of the negotiations led to no agreement, and the agent, having lost all patience, was obliged to depart at the end of October, having effected nothing. "The Khan and his coadjutors," wrote Nikiphoroff to Perovski, "have no idea of political treaties, and cannot even comprehend the word 'plenipotentiary.' Fully aware of their impotence, they cannot estimate the value of rapid means of communication, and fear force, which alone can bring them to reason."

Khiva, however, dreading an open rupture with Russia, despatched fresh envoys to our Court along with Nikiphoroff, for the purpose of a final conference with our Government.

In the first letter of the Khivan Khan, Allah Kouli, to the Emperor Nicholas Paulovich, the former writes very familiarly, calling the Russian Tsar his faithful friend and old acquaintance. Its tone seemed to declare that it was not he, but we, who sought his amity. Having liberally rewarded the Khivan envoy, our Government sent another agent back to Khiva with him, Lieutenant-Colonel Danilevski, who, on his departure, as is customary, was furnished with instructions. Numerous gifts for the Khan and his courtiers were entrusted to him.

On the 1st August, 1842, our agent left Orenburg, and directed his course through Emba and the Oust-Ourt to the western shores of the Aral Sea. On the 19th of October he arrived in Khiva. The course of the negotiations with the Khan, Allah Kouli, were momentarily interrupted by his death; they were completed by his successor, the Rahim Kouli. The result of the conferences was execution of an act by which Khiva bound herself to certain articles. The following is the text :—

In the name of Almighty and Most Merciful God.

This act is executed by the ruling Khan of Khaurezm, the high and illustrious Rahim Kouli Khan, in that, having a real desire to remain permanently in close alliance with the illustrious and powerful Empire of Russia, and to strengthen our ties of amity with her, and observe in all strictness the rules of peaceable and good neighbours, we promise for ourselves, our successors, and posterity, and for all our subject peoples :—

I. Henceforward to undertake no hostilities, either open or secret, against Russia.

II. Not to commit or connive at robbery, piracy, and kidnapping in the Steppe, or on the Caspian Sea, and in case such crimes be committed by tribes subject to Khiva, to hand over the guilty to immediate punishment, and return the plundered property to the proper owners.

III. Not to keep Russians in slavery, and to answer for the security, both in person and goods, of every Russian subject who may find himself in the Khivan dominions.

IV. In case of the death of a Russian subject in the dominions of Khiva to send his entire property to the Russian frontier authorities, for transmission to his heirs.

V. Not to allow fugitives and rebels, who are Russian subjects, to conceal themselves in the Khivan dominions, but to hand them over to the Russian frontier authorities.

VI. To levy a duty, once a year only, on goods imported into the Khivan dominions by Russian merchants, and not higher than five per cent. on the net value.

VII. To levy no duty on goods belonging to Russian merchants going to Bokhara or any other Central Asian territories across the Sir, or on goods returning by this road.

VIII. To behave generally, and under all circumstances, as good neighbours and true friends, and also to strengthen all ties of friendship with the mighty Russian Empire.

In evidence of which we confirm this document with our golden seal, and consign it to the Plenipotentiary of the mighty Russian Empire, the most noble Lieutenant-Colonel Danilevski. Given in the year 1258 of the Hegira, in the month Moharrem.

It is remarkable that in this document nothing was said about the boundary. Regarding the extension of his influence in the steppe, the Khan merely assured our agent verbally that he would act so as to avoid incurring the displeasure of our Government.

On the copy of the document handed to the Khan, our agent made the following indorsement:—

Having received for presentation to His Imperial Majesty the Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias the above document from the Illustrious Ruler of Khiva, Rahim Kouli: I, in virtue of the powers entrusted to me, do here bear witness, that, according to the reciprocal conditions of the document, the mighty Russian power:—

I. Consigns to total oblivion the former hostile actions of the Khivan rulers against her.

II. Renounces all claims for payment for caravans plundered up to the present time.

III. Promises complete security and legal protection to Khivan subjects visiting Russia.

IV. Reserves in her dominions for Khivan traders all the privileges which those of other Asiatic powers enjoy.

This assurance made by me will be confirmed by letter of the Illustrious and Mighty Russian Imperial Vice-Chancellor, in the name of H.I.H. the Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias. The exact observance, on the part of the illustrious Khivan rulers, of the conditions laid down in the above act, will be guaranteed by the persons and property of Khivan subjects who may be in the Russian Empire. Given at Khiva, 29th December, 1842.

After a stay of three months and a half at Khiva, our mission, accompanied by the new Khivan envoy, left, and, passing through Koungrad and Ak-Boulak, arrived at Iletzkaya Zashchita on the 11th of February, and passed on to St. Petersburg.

Our Government was very well satisfied with the conclusion of these terms with Khiva, though indeed they were not very pretentious.

The Khivan envoy, generously rewarded and furnished with rich gifts for the Khan and his ministers, returned home in June. Thus our differences with Khiva were terminated to all appearances satisfactorily; but we can state positively that the only advantageous results of our negotiations with this khanate were:—Firstly, an extension of information regarding the geography of Central Asia; sketches of the distances traversed were executed, maps were made, detailed descriptions of Khiva written, &c. &c. Secondly, a temporary abolition of the trade in Russian slaves, in accordance with the provisions of the treaty.

As regards the remaining articles of this treaty, they remained a dead letter. Already, in 1843 and 1844, Khiva protects the well-known rebel of the steppe, Kenisar Kassymoff. In 1845, emissaries of the Khivan Khan were active in the southern portion of the Kirgiz steppe, within our territory. In 1848, bands of Khivese appear at the mouths of the Sir, near our newly-erected fort, Raimsk. But in 1858 our agent in Khiva, Colonel Ignatieff (now ambassador extraordinary at Constantinople), laying much stress in his conferences on the deed handed to Danilevski, received the answer from the Khivese that they did not remember the contents of this document, and that, after due search

in their archives, they were unable to find the slightest trace of it.

From that time both Turkomans and Kirgiz, accounting themselves subjects of Khiva, and under the protection of the Khivan Khan, have let slip no opportunity of attacking Russians, and carrying them off into slavery. These are the reasons which have induced us to take decisive measures against Khiva.

Having thus sketched our relations with Khiva, we will pass on to a description of this khanate in its statistical, ethnographical, and military aspects.

CHAPTER II.

Extent of the Khivan Khanate.—Its surface.—The River Amou.—Lakes.—Climate.—Population.

MODERN KHIVA, surrounded on all sides by deserts, has no well-defined frontier, for which reason it is impossible to estimate its superficial measurement. Considering only the fertile parts situated near the lower parts of the Amou, we may estimate the entire surface at 400 square miles.

The valley of the Amou presents a completely level surface, with a considerable slope to the north-west. The most remarkable elevations within the limits of the khanate are the south-western extremity of the Oust-Ourt, and the mountains of Sheikh Jeli. The boundary of the Oust-Ourt, or the Chink, constitutes the western shore of the Aral Sea and Gulf of Aibougir. The slopes of the Chink are precipitous, indented with ravines and clefts; but, depressed towards the south, the slope becomes gentle and suitable for movement. Turning sharply to the west, the Chink loses itself in the Turkoman steppes.

The mountains of Sheikh Jeli extend along the lower course of the Amou, and their north-eastern slopes lose themselves in the sands of Kizil Koum. In this mountain range we find the traces of iron-ore, and marble of bad quality.

As in our previous sketches we have described with sufficient minuteness the nature of the steppe, we will not repeat what we have said, but will pass on to the hydrographic description of the khanate.

The Amou waters the inhabited part of the khanate for a distance of 400 versts. Before falling into the Aral Sea it forms several branches. The branch with most water is the Oulkoun, having a breadth of from 280 to 420 yards, with a mean depth of 28 feet. The bar has but a depth of 2 or 3 feet, so that even this, the deepest branch, presents difficulties to navigation. The breadth of the Amou, between Koungrad and Bent, is from 90 to 140 yards. Lower down, the breadth becomes greater, and reaches, in places, a breadth of from 500 to 1,000 yards. The mean depth is from 15 to 20 feet; there are no fords; the bottom is everywhere composed of mud or clay; its rapidity diminishes as it approaches the mouth; the floods take place twice a year, from May till June, and from July till August. The river freezes at the end of December or the beginning of January, and the

ice breaks up in February. There have been years in which it has only frozen near the banks. The water is turbid, but wholesome and pleasant to the taste. According to Vambéry, the water in the river, on account of the sand contained in it, is not so suitable for drinking purposes as the water in the branches, where, in consequence of the slower current, the sand has time to settle. The inhabitants maintain that no river in the world, not even the "blessed" Nile, can compare with the Amou in the quality of its water. Vambéry thought that the water appeared to him so pleasant to the taste because he arrived on the banks of the river straight from the waterless steppe, and that consequently he came to the conclusion that actually, neither in Europe nor Asia, was there a river or spring to be found with such pleasant water as that of the Amou.

A quantity of irrigatory canals lead from the river, of which the most important are on the left bank, and all have a north-western direction. Besides, these canals constantly change direction according to the necessities of the inhabitants.

For a distance of 300 versts from where it falls into the Aral Sea, the Amou presents a fertile oasis, transformed by human labour from a sandy desert. An opinion is current that this oasis was formerly

more extensive, and that it now decreases in consequence of the dryness of the climate of Central Asia. In the middle ages the valley of the Amou was known under the name of Khaurezm. At present it includes the khanate of Khiva, and maintains a tolerably numerous local population; it is the economic and political centre of all the nomad races scattered over the neighbouring steppes.

Near the Khivan town of Pitniak the Amou begins to divide into branches and artificial canals, which, though not reaching the sea, on account of their number and importance to the country both in an economic and military point of view, deserve attention. These canals are destitute of bridges, and, as they are not fordable, present a considerable obstacle to the passage of troops. On the other hand, if their points of efflux be seized and the water dammed, the immediate submission is attained of all towns and villages making use of this water. However, the surface watered by the canals and their branches is not great, for the spots irrigated generally lie quite close to the canal; wherefore they form merely a narrow strip bordering the canal, whilst all the intervening space betwixt such strips are steppes, fit only for nomads, but by no means for the permanent abode of man.

Amongst the natural branches of the Amou, the following must be mentioned :—

1. The Laudan branches off at Fort Bent. Its length up to its embouchure in Lake Aibougir is a hundred versts. It was not long ago since this was the most considerable of the lateral branches of the Amou. Since the waters of the Amou have been chiefly directed into the eastern branches, the Laudan has much decreased in volume.

2. The Kouk-Uziak leaves the parent stream opposite Khojeli and flows into the Aral Sea. This is the deepest of all the branches of the Amou, and was ascended by Boutakoff in a tolerably large steamer to a distance of thirty-four versts from the mouth. Higher up it becomes a shallow streamlet with boulders. Its banks serve as camping places for the nomads, who have here fine meadows with artificial irrigation.

3. The Taldyk, flows into the gulf of the same name by eight mouths, of which two are navigable for sea-going vessels. The Taldyk, according to Boutakoff, had, near the sea, in the years 1848 and 1849, such a rapid current that it took men off their feet. In 1858 its waters were dammed up; its bottom was muddy, and its depth on the bar did not exceed a foot and a half.

4. The Oulkoun constitutes, according to the

opinion of the natives, the present continuation of the river. The breadth of the channel varies from one hundred and twenty to two hundred and forty yards, and, in the flood season, from two hundred and eighty to three hundred and fifty. The steamer *Perovski* ascended this branch as far as Koungrad in 1858, and found everywhere a depth of from 8 to 18 feet.

All the traditions of the Khivese unanimously assert that the Amou formerly fell into the Caspian Sea, but not one of them refers to any terrestrial catastrophe, in consequence of which the flow of the Amou was turned into the Aral Sea. The inhabitants explain this phenomenon quite simply and naturally by asserting that the last of the shahs of Khaurezm, Sultan Mahmoud, having his capital at Kounia Ourgenj, through which the Amou flowed, wished to settle a part of the desert lying between the right bank of the river and the Aral Sea, because the sands on the left bank did not allow sufficient space for agriculture. He therefore commanded some canals to be excavated from the right bank of the river for the irrigation of part of the above-mentioned space. The first attempt was successful, and the transfer of inhabitants to this bank increased from year to year. But, at the same time, the canals augmented in number and proportions, so

that those on the left bank began to dry up, whilst the new ones became year by year more abundant in water, and finally the Amou itself was turned aside into the new direction, which conducted it into the Aral Sea. This tradition is not destitute of foundation.

On this subject the Khivese also recount the following anecdote. Shah Sultan Mahmoud had a slave named Khoja, who for services rendered received his liberty, and assumed the designation of Khoja Tarkhan, by order of the Shah. He made use of his liberty by undertaking a voyage on the Amou to the Caspian, whose western shores he reached, and founded, near the mouths of the Volga, a town which he named after himself. Even now the Khivese always call Astrakhan, Khoji Tarkhan, and the Caspian Sea, Khoji Tarkhan Aral (Sea).

Of the lakes in the Khivan khanate we may point out that of Aibougir, which is properly a gulf of the Aral Sea, but with whose waters it unites in flood time only. From north to south it measures 120 versts. Its breadth is from fifteen to forty versts, its depth from two to five feet. Almost the entire surface of lake Aibougir is covered thickly with reeds; the water is fresh, but the bottom muddy. The two other lakes, Dau Kara and Soultan Souljer Liazy, are insignificant;

the first of them is an extensive morass, thickly overgrown with reeds, and from the second is obtained salt of bad quality, which is conveyed to the southern portions of the Khivan khanate.

The climate of Khiva is quite continental; the winters are not of long duration, but the frosts often sink to from four to eight degrees below zero. Spring approaches in the middle of February, or, if late, in the beginning of March. At the end of March, the vines, pomegranates, and fig-trees begin to bud, and in the first days of April are covered with green; in April the heat increases, and becomes excessive in July, whilst the atmosphere becomes suffocating from the thick clouds of dust. Rain occurs very seldom in spring and autumn; hoar frost commences at the end of September, but does not become sensible till November. They begin harvesting the wheat in the beginning of July; about this time also the apricots and plums ripen; in the second half of August the other fruits ripen, and in September they harvest rice, madder, and sesamum seed. The leaves on the trees begin to grow yellow and fall not earlier than the first half of November. The summer nights, though not oppressive, are not so cool as they usually are in other southern countries. Winter approaches in December, and is very unequal. Years occur in which snow does

not fall at all, and when the Amou freezes near the banks only. In general, snow does not fall in sufficient quantity to cover the ground with a coating, and does not usually lie for more than two or three days. The Amou, as already said, freezes towards the end of December, when the thickness of the ice does not exceed half an *arsheen*.* The ice generally remains for two or three weeks, and always melts in the month of February. Storms and hail scarcely ever occur. The dryness of the air is very great, even in the autumn months. The prevailing winds are the eastern and north-western. The western wind is distinguished by its violence, which often upsets tents and breaks trees; it rages only in the spring, when the trees begin to cover themselves with leaves.

Owing to the impossibility of collecting reliable information regarding the health of the inhabitants we must necessarily confine ourselves to a few general remarks.

We must allow that, in general, the climate of the khanate is favourable to the health of the natives, and in spite of the absence of regular medical assistance, the mortality amongst the inhabitants is not great. The water, as well in the Amou and the

* An arsheen = 2 ft. 4 in. This seems a considerable thickness for ice, but so it stands in the original. A vershok, or the sixteenth part of an arsheen, is suggested.—*Translator.*

canals flowing out of it as in the wells of all the settled part of the khanate, is very wholesome. Fruits, even when used to excess, do not entail hurtful consequences; there are no destructive epidemics. Generally speaking, the following diseases prevail:—Fevers, occurring usually in spring and the beginning of winter; syphilis rages to a considerable extent; small-pox carries off numbers of children; consumption, generally attacking those who use opium, and developing itself with great rapidity, owing to the dryness of the climate; and, lastly, inflammation of the eyes constitutes one of the principal chronic complaints. The number of blind in the khanate is very considerable, which is partly explained by the deficiency of proper medical assistance, and also by the excessive dustiness and dryness of the atmosphere during almost the entire year.

Although the Khivese as a rule enjoy good health, they rarely attain an advanced age, the signs of which show themselves prematurely. The chief reason of this lies, not in the climate, however, but in their manner of life. The same climate does not manifest such an injurious effect on the health of foreigners. The Persians serve as an evidence of this; they, as well as the Russian captives, soon become accustomed to the climate. Besides this, Danilevski, in confirmation

of these statements regarding the Khivan climate, points out the fact, that out of forty individuals composing our mission to Khiva in 1842, not a single man was seriously ill during a residence of four months in the khanate.

If the Khivan Government could be made to understand the advantages of medicinal remedies and the beneficial results of vaccination, there is no doubt but that the population, under favourable circumstances, would increase in a short time.

It is difficult to arrive at the general total of the population, so much the more so that different travellers adduce figures which not only fail to agree, but on the contrary contradict each other. We prefer the figures of Vambéry, the most recent traveller, to those of others. The amount of population varies between three hundred thousand and four hundred thousand souls.

The population of Khiva is remarkable for its variety of race. Ouzbeks, Turkomans, Karakalpaks, Kirgiz, Sarts, and Persians live there. Each of these tribes is distinguishable by marked features from the others.

The ruling race is the Ouzbek, a settled race employed in agriculture and, in addition to Khiva, inhabiting Bokhara, Kokan, and our government of Turkestan. It is subdivided into various branches, estimated by Vambéry at thirty-two.

They wear long conical hats of fur, great clumsy boots of Russia leather, and in summer a long shirt. The women, with long conical turbans on their heads, made of from fifteen to twenty Russian cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, have, notwithstanding the oppressive heat, to drag home water in heavy pitchers, though muffled in thick clothing, and with clumsy boots on their feet. At the first glance the Ouzbek betrays his affinity with the races of Iran; to wit, by his beard, which, in the native of Turan, according to Vambéry's expression, may be always accounted foreign property, whilst at the same time the colour of the skin and the features often indicate a purely Tartar origin. Even as regards character, the Khivan Ouzbek is to be preferred to his remaining countrymen: he is honourable and straightforward, but still as wild as the nomads who surround him, and he does not possess a mind rendered acute by Eastern civilization. Next to the Ottoman Turk, there is more to be made of the Ouzbek than any other of the Eastern races.

To the fact that Islamite education is less disseminated in Khiva than in Bokhara it is due, that the Ouzbeks have preserved many of their pagan national customs, and also many of the religious ceremonies of the Persian fire-worshippers. A particular love for music and the Turkish

national poetry, which latter the Central Asian nomad loves far more passionately than any civilized nation, is preserved here to a fuller extent than in Kokan, Bokhara, or Kashgar. The Khivan performers on the *doutar* (a double-stringed guitar) and the *koboss* (lute), are famed all over Turkestan. *Nevai*, the greatest Ouzbek poet, is known everywhere. But ten years never passes without the appearance of a lyric poet of the second or third order. Vambéry knew two brothers in Khiva, one of whom wrote excellent verses, and the other possessed the heroic patience to translate a large historical composition from the Persian into the Turko-Ouzbek dialect, in order to make it accessible to his son. This labour occupied twenty years, but the translator hesitated to tell any one, merely because in these countries any occupation but that of religion is looked upon as frivolous.

Regarding this favourable opinion which Vambéry formed of the Ouzbeks, we must place in opposition to it the contrary views of other travellers, who had opportunities of becoming much more intimately acquainted with them. Both Russians and English who have visited Khiva positively assert that treachery, mendacity, cruelty and rapacity form the leading features of the Khivan character.

Vambéry himself contradicts what he said

before by relating what he witnessed at Khiva. He once saw, in the court-yard of one of the government buildings, three hundred Turkoman prisoners of war, tormented by hunger and the fear of death for the space of several days. These prisoners were separated into two groups; one of these, composed of those who had not attained the age of forty years, was destined for sale or for gift; the others, reckoned on account of their old age or condition as *aksakals*, *i.e.*, grey-beards, were to be subjected to such punishment as the Khan should adjudge. They chained the former, ten to fifteen men together, and led them off; the latter, resigned to their fate, awaited their doom. The executioners arrived and dragged them along like sheep. At the same time that many were dragged to the gallows or the dungeon, eight old men, at the sign of the executioner, lay down on the ground. Having secured their hands and feet, the executioner put out their eyes; after each operation he stood on the chest of the blinded man, and wiped his bloody knife on the grey beard of the latter. It was horrible to watch the victims, released from their fetters after the excruciating punishment, try to arise, groping with their hands for the surrounding objects.

Having related this episode, Vambéry says that tortures of various kinds, exercised upon prisoners

of war, is a common occurrence. In Khiva, as in all Central Asia, they do not appear to be aware that this is cruelty; inhuman behaviour is here accounted as perfectly natural, as it is in accordance with law, custom, and religion. The present Khan, wishing to acquire the reputation of a Defender of the Faith, punishes in the most cruel manner every offence against religion. It is sufficient to look at a woman covered with a veil to incur punishment. Religion commands the man to be hanged and the woman to be buried up to the waist near the gallows and stoned to death. But as there are no stones in Khiva they use *kiziaks*, or hard balls of earth. At the third blow the unfortunate victim is covered with dust, and her blood-stained body is frightfully disfigured.

Such scenes and such manners can scarcely be in unison with candour and honesty, attributes of quite a different nature.

Vambéry recounts one more episode, not devoid of interest, which illustrates their manners. One day he surprised the treasurer of the Khan sorting gowns destined for rewards to heroes. These were brilliant-coloured silken caphtans of four sorts, embroidered with large flowers of gold; they were denominated four, twelve, twenty, and forty heads respectively. As there were no heads designed or embroidered upon them, Vambéry was

anxious to know the reason of these strange terms. He was informed that the plain caphtans were the reward of four heads cut off; the most handsome, of forty.

On the next day a hundred horsemen arrived from the camp, each of them dragging prisoners, amongst whom were women and children, either tied to their horses' tails or to their saddle-bows. To each saddle was attached a sack filled with human heads, testifying to their heroic deeds. Arrived in the square, the horseman presented the captives to the Khan or some courtier, then opened the sack, seized it by its two corners, and emptied the heads, bearded and beardless, like potatoes at the feet of the receiver. The servants kicked them into one spot, where soon a great heap of some hundreds of heads was accumulated. Each hero took a receipt for the heads consigned, and, after a few days, was paid for them.

Owing to the discrepancy of the figures adduced by different travellers, it is difficult to estimate the present number of Ouzbeks. We may, with tolerable accuracy, place it at two hundred thousand souls.

The Ouzbeks in the khanate are agriculturists, artizans, and traders; besides this, as conquerors of the country, they reserve to themselves the honour of giving to the country its khans and

vizirs, all of whom must be native Ouzbeks. As regards the military qualities of the Khivese, we may say that, in general, without distinction of Turkish or Persian extraction, they are brave to desperation at the first onslaught or when victorious, but soon lose their courage at the first steady resistance and become the ordinary Central Asian cowards, when they soon take to flight. Their endurance in the field is also not great, and, for a long time, they have ceased to undertake expeditions themselves, but despatch Kirgiz and Turkomans on their warlike undertakings. Their weapons also are not of good quality.

The Ouzbeks, as has been already mentioned above, are divided into tribes, of which the most powerful still retain legends of their past might, and, consequently, nourish contempt for the remainder. All this manifests itself amongst them in the matter of marriage. These races generally intermarry amongst themselves, and if they take a wife from the inferior tribes, they never give their daughters to the latter. It is also true that when an Ouzbek says that his tribe does not give its daughters to another tribe, this tale may, generally speaking, be put down as a gasconnade; the rich and high-born alone give, but the poor marry into that tribe where they sell cheapest, and give their daughters where most is to be got for them.

Among the Ouzbeks it is not accounted ignominious for a man to take a wife out of an inferior tribe, if he has several of them; but for a noble to give his daughter in marriage to a man of an inferior tribe is a positive disgrace.

Of course a large dower, knowledge of the family of the bridegroom, and wealth constitute, for the Central Asiatic as well as for the European, facts sufficient to induce him to give his daughter to whomsoever he pleases. The Ouzbek women are not nice in the choice of their husbands; it is all the same to them whom they marry.

All domestic and field labours (in some families the tilling of the soil also) fall on the women. They look after household matters, collect fuel, prepare *kiziaks*,* spin, make clothes for the whole family, weave linen, dress sheep-skins, tan and dye leather, and make pelisses, &c. Besides, not a few of the field labours fall to the lot of the woman; she ploughs, assisting her husband, brother, or son in this labour; she rakes the beds in the gardens, reaps, conveys the sheaves of corn to and from the threshing-floor, and winnows them. In one word, the woman is amongst the Ouzbeks an ox, whom they work incessantly. It is only the independent Ouzbek male who does nothing; he

* Lumps of dried dung, used almost universally in the East as fuel. —*Translator.*

wanders from bazaar to bazaar, visits his acquaintances, and is rarely found at home.

The husband always keeps the money. He doles it out to the wife for expenses with great economy. And more, the wife is obliged to defray her daily household expenses from the proceeds of her own labour, her receipts for spinning, sale of cocoons, &c.

Only on festive occasions is money expended by the men; the mother buys new clothing for her children out of her earnings; the father occupies himself almost exclusively with his favourite child.

Even rich Ouzbeks wear their clothes till they become rags and tatters; and, having brought them to this condition, they give them to workmen, or order their wives to cut clothes for their children out of them.

Solicitude for his children in any relation whatever is the last thing the Ouzbek thinks about. When the child is sufficiently grown to be a working power, he becomes necessary to the family, and they begin to pay attention to him, *i.e.*, to heap work upon him. Intellect, beauty, presence of mind, in the child as in the adult, count for nothing.

The birth of a son always rejoices a father the most. The sentiments of the mother, it appears,

are more in favour of daughters. In the daughter the mother sees her future assistant, whilst the father looks upon the infant boy as the future partner of his labours.

No particular affection exists between parents and children. Mother and father are often subjected to blows from their sons; the lowest abuse, from the daughters as well as the sons, is not considered objectionable by Ouzbek fathers and mothers.

If an Ouzbek has several wives, he tries to keep them apart from each other, not in obedience to the prescriptions of the Koran, which he neither knows nor tries to know, but because, in the majority of cases, it is physically impossible to keep them in adjacent apartments. If they lived together they would fight every day, and claw each other's faces like cats. The man is in a still worse situation if all his wives have children; then to the brawls of his faithful ones are superadded the brawls of their children, and the general result is hell (*sic*), but not domestic bliss. However, these family differences do not proceed from jealousy. A husband signifies in the Ouzbek tongue *irkek*, *i.e.*, male; the word *irkek* applies also to a bull or dog, &c. The differences between the wives of one *irkek* do not proceed from ordinary jealousy, but from material advantages and disadvantages, from

the desire of each wife to have the larger share of influence in the household of the *irkek;* or that one of the females has received better clothes from the male, and the other—worse. "It's all the same to me whether my husband loves me or not, as long as he gives me fine presents. If he is my *irkek*, he loves me," thus, or almost thus, reason the fair Ouzbekesses.

The Ouzbeks do not marry very young women. We here speak of the mass, not of the rich, who, already in possession of several wives (for example, eleven), marry children of ten years for the sake of variety. The poor Ouzbek seeks a good work-woman in his wife, an untiring ox. A young woman cannot endure the severe labour to which marriage devotes her, and would not be able to contribute towards the household expenditure. Therefore maidens do not, in the majority of cases, marry till the age of fifteen or twenty.

In some Ouzbek tribes the married sons live apart; in others, they live for a long time with their father, and have a common cooking-pot with him. In the latter case, a family consisting of ten sons, who have their own children in their turn, is reckoned as one household.

The *kalym*, or price paid by the bridegroom for the future services of his wife, does not constitute an indispensable condition for contracting a mar-

riage amongst the Ouzbeks; they often marry without any *kalym* at all.

Good friends or poor men do not pay *kalym* on marriage; besides which, this custom is not met with in all Ouzbek tribes. Friends sometimes make certain conditions (the same is the custom among the Kirgiz) that children born to them of different sexes, shall, from their very birth, be considered bridegroom and bride. Such children grow up together, and, when grown up, marry without paying *kalym*. But the bridegroom, in the case of similar previously concerted matches, has the full right of refusing to marry the maiden designated his wife before his birth.

Poor men either acquire a wife by working for her relatives, or having married the girl, remain as labourers of her father, *i.e.*, work out the *kalym* after marriage. It sometimes happens that a man merely cohabits with a woman, and does not conclude a formal marriage. In this case, for appearances' sake, be it understood, they try to conceal the fact from the woman's father.

The mother is always aware of a similar unlawful, according to their ideas, cohabitation, and it is she who arranges it. Cases of similar *half-marriages* are far from rare among the poorer classes.

The Ouzbek is reckoned a bridegroom for a

period varying from a few days to some years. In general he is reckoned a bridegroom until he has paid the *kalym* for his wife, or until the father, mother, and kinsmen of the bride declare that they consider the debt as discharged, although in reality it is not fully paid. When an Ouzbek has received the permission of the father and relatives of the bride to be married, the eldest members of the houses desiring to become related assemble, without the knowledge of the bridegroom and bride, a *maslia-khat*, *i.e.*, a council, to settle the amount of *kalym*, and the time for reading the prayers of *fatikh*, or courtship, or, as they themselves express it, the time of "breaking of cakes," and the celebration of the wedding. The fortune of the bridegroom is discussed by both sides, and, according as it is great or small, a more or less distant date is appointed for the celebration of the *nikah*, or wedding. The amount of the *kalym* depends principally, and almost exclusively, on the wealth of the bride's parents, not on their rank.

After the wedding, the first night must, according to custom, be spent by the youthful pair in the house of the father of the bride. After this night the husband, if he finds that his wife has been unchaste, has the right to separate from her at once; in which case he receives back all the *kalym* which he has expended.

In this case the verbal accusation of the husband goes for nothing; it must be confirmed by the mothers of the husband and wife and a third party, who all, according to custom, enter the bridal chamber after the departure of the husband. Besides, this, the inquest takes into consideration: Did the husband cohabit with his wife before marriage? The neighbours are *always* aware of a similar cohabitation.

To the honour of the Ouzbeks be it said, that such a circumstance as absence of proof of the innocence of the woman does not serve as a pretext for divorce, or even for disagreement of any sort. They say, "To marry a girl who has been intimate with a man is the same thing as to marry a widow. A wife cannot be responsible to her husband for her former mode of life. As long as she was not a wife she was free."

A husband may take his wife to his own house after two or three days, but may also leave her in the house of her parents. In the first case, all the friends of the bridegroom are present at the introduction of the bride into the house of her husband; on this occasion he regales them for the last time as a bachelor. From the moment the wife takes up her abode in his house, the bachelors no more associate with him. In the second case, the husband visits the wife clandestinely at night. An

old woman, nearly related to the wife, must meet him and guide him to the apartment of the latter. Although she has separate apartments, yet she is subordinate to her father and mother in all her occupations.

It happens sometimes that a married Ouzbek woman lives alone for four years, and goes to her husband with three or four children. During all the time of separate cohabitation, the husband must not show himself to the father or mother of his wife.

As in the previous sketch of Turkestan we described the Turkomans with sufficient exactitude, we shall say very little about them here. These nomads, according to Vambéry, reside in the steppes adjacent to the oasis of Khiva, towards the south, and partly the centre of the same, on the strips of steppe between the canals. They belong principally to two tribes, the Yomouds and the Chowdors; there are but few Goklens. Their total number may amount to fifty thousand souls.

The Karakalpaks form a third element in the population; they are nearly related to the Kirgiz by origin and mode of life. Formerly they played a very important part in the affairs of Central Asia, but now are the most oppressed of Central Asian tribes, and have the reputation of being

idiots. Their women are considered the handsomest in all Turkestan. They roam over the northern part of the Khivan khanate, near the Aral Sea, Lake Dau Kara, and the towns of Koungrad, Khojeili, and Kipchâk. They employ themselves equally in agriculture, cattle-breeding, and fishing; their cattle-breeding is, however, very insignificant. Their total does not now-a-days exceed fifty thousand souls. They are bound by military service to Khiva, and pay tribute to her. They are divided into various branches, ruled by their own chiefs, under the suzerainty of the Khivan authorities. They do not like the Khivese.

We have scarcely any information regarding the Kirgiz subject to Khiva. The majority of this race is now under Russian rule; therefore we shall dilate on them here only in so far as they have immediate relation with Khiva.

The Kirgiz inhabit the immense steppes lying between Siberia, Khiva, Turkestan, and the Caspian Sea. As all the revolutions which have taken place in the course of hundreds, and maybe thousands, of years, have had considerable influence on the Kirgiz, they offer now the most faithful picture of the manners and customs which characterised the aborigines of Turan, and present a strange medley of virtue and brutality. The

strong inclination of the Kirgiz for music and poetry, and especially their aristocratic pride, are striking characteristics. The first thing a Kirgiz asks when meeting another is this, "Who are thy seven fathers?" *i.e.*, ancestors. The other, even if a child of eight years, always replies to the question with exactitude. Failing this, he is accounted extremely uneducated and uncivilised.

The Kirgiz are far inferior to the Ouzbeks in valour, and more so still to the Turkomans. Islam is much weaker amongst them than amongst the latter, and Russia, by her administrative measures, has done much more towards implanting it amongst the people than the Kirgiz themselves. The rich elders alone engage a moolla from the town, who, for a certain reward in sheep, horses, and camels, fulfils the duties of teacher, priest, and secretary.

The Kirgiz, in spite of scorching heat, or of snow a sajen* deep, roam the steppe, nourishing themselves almost entirely on milk, and scarcely using bread at all. They look upon the inhabitants of towns as very strange people, and on agriculture as a mark of poverty; wherefore a husbandman and a poor man are expressed in Kirgiz by one and the same word, *bygoush*. According to their æsthetic ideas, the Mongolian race

* 1 sajen = 7 ft.

represents the highest type of beauty; because God, who created them with projecting cheek-bones, assimilated them to the horse—the horse, in the eyes of the Kirgiz, being the ornament of creation.

It is thought that the total number of Kirgiz under the rule of Khiva does not exceed from ten to fifteen thousand souls.

The fifth nationality of Khiva are the Sarts or Tajiks. The word is Persian, but the people constitute the original population of Kaurezm. At present there are but few of them, and they are exchanging, little by little, their native Persian tongue for the Turkoman. A Sart may be known by his sly though refined manner. The Ouzbeks are not fond of the Sarts. It is characteristic that, notwithstanding the five hundred years they have lived together, there have been very few intermarriages amongst them.

As the Sarts are much more numerous in Kokan and Bokhara, we shall consider them more in detail when reviewing those khanates.

The Persians live here as slaves, or as liberated slaves. These are the unfortunates captured by the Turkomans, and employed in Khiva in the most severe labour, under the savage and cruel *régime* of their despotic lords. The brand of slavery is effaced only in the third generation, and

then the Persians cannot be distinguished from the native Khivese. Many captives who have bought their liberty prefer to remain in Khiva. The total number of Persians in Khiva is forty thousand souls.

CHAPTER III.

Religious and Intellectual State of the People.—Domestic Life.—Rural Economy.—Trade.—Communications.—Description of Towns.—Government.—Finances and Military Strength.—Russia's Military Plans.

ALL the inhabitants of the Khivan khanate profess the Sunnite interpretation of the Mahommedan religion, to which they forcibly convert their captives, the Persian Shiites. The Islamism of the Khivese consists in an exact and undeviating observance of the ceremonies prescribed by the Koran. Religious fanaticism amongst the people is fed by the priesthood, at whose head stands the *Nakib*, who is selected from amongst the descendants of Mahomet. In addition to their judicial functions, the priesthood has charge of the education of the people. The Khivan *oulemas*, or instructors, are not renowned in the East for their learning. Superstition and ignorance are the distinctive characteristics of the people. Vambéry relates, amongst other things, that many of the

people, including even the priesthood, seized every opportunity of asking him the most stupid questions. One asked for religious instruction; another wanted to know if there was another such charming spot as Khiva in the whole world; another wished to obtain reliable information as to whether the Sultan actually received his dinner and supper daily from Mecca, and whether these were positively transmitted from the Kaaba to the Court of Constantinople in a single minute of time.

The *medrassas*, or schools in Central Asia may serve as an indication of the degree of prosperity of the country, and of the religious education of its inhabitants. Both rulers and people display a very fervent zeal for their construction and maintenance. Several *medrassas* are to be found in Khiva; amongst which we may name the Medrassa of Madamin Khan, a two-storied building constructed in 1842 by a Persian architect, on the model of a first-rate Persian karavanserai. On the right a very clumsy tower elevates itself, rising to a considerable height above the building. Owing to the death of the builder, it remained unfinished. This *medrassa* contains 130 cells, accommodating 260 pupils; 5,000 tillias * and 12,000

* A gold tillia = 4 roubles = 12 shillings. A silver tillia equals just half this sum. The author does not mention to which he refers.

batmans * of wheat are expended yearly on its maintenance. Both *medrassas* and the priesthood subsist on the revenues called *bakouf*, which is drawn from special lands, and different subscriptions made both by the Khan and private individuals.

The population of the khanate, being for the most part weighed down by the most coarse and unbridled despotism, is remarkable for its ignorance and for the limited nature of its wants. In domestic life their poverty almost reaches a state of beggary; their dwellings consist of rickety huts made of clay; the fire-place, with its cauldron, is placed in the centre; the smoke, offensive to the eyes, makes its way out through an aperture in the flat roof of the hut; the interior decorations consist of felts, carpets stretched over the earthen floor amongst the rich, and a box in which is kept the wearing apparel.

Their food is very scanty and simple; it consists of fried wheaten cakes and a decoction of water, in which they put the seed of the *jougara*, peas, the leaves of the beet, and salt. Pillaw, consisting of rice, mutton, and salt, is only served in the palace of the Khan, or in the houses of the rich. The oil of the sesamum is used for lighting their dwellings.

* A batman = about 43 lbs. avoirdupois.

Let us now proceed to the description of the commercial activity of the people.

The rural industry of the Khivese is confined to agriculture, gardening, cattle and silkworm breeding.

As regards industry and skill in the cultivation of their fields, the Khivese deserve commendation. To these qualities alone it is due that their sandy, clayey, or salt soil gives good crops. The spot chosen for fields is divided into *tanaps*,* and each of these is dug round on its four sides with a small ditch, which is placed in communication with the nearest canal. The place for the field is dug out to a level below that of the lateral canals surrounding it, whilst in place of manure they scatter here and there small heaps of earth, taken from the vicinity of their dwellings and mixed with dry grass, sometimes with ashes, and even with the clay of ruined buildings, which acquires some fertilising powers from an admixture of straw. The Khivese then scatter these heaps with their shovels, and allow the water to flow into the canals until it covers the whole of the ground intended for cultivation to a depth of two inches or more.

When the water has sunk into the earth, and the surface of the field, still retaining some humidity, ceases to be muddy, they commence ploughing.

* A tanap = a small fraction more than an acre.

They then sow; after which they harrow the ground with a cogged plank, and again admit the water; repeating the process as often as is necessary. In places situated on a higher level, or where the excavation of the ground would be accompanied with too much labour, they use a hydraulic machine.

The season and frequency of the irrigations of sown fields depends on the weather, but chiefly on the nature of the crops.

They sow the following cereals in the khanate: wheat, rice, barley and millet, jougara, lentils, and peas.

For wheat they manure the earth more carefully than for other sorts of corn, and they irrigate it five or six times whilst the grain is germinating.

They sow five *batmans* on one *tanap*, and in a fertile year the harvest is from sixty to seventy *batmans*.

Rice requires constant watering, wherefore it is principally cultivated where means of irrigation are abundant. Its crop is usually twenty-five, and even thirty-fold.

Barley and millet are produced in small quantities, principally in the northern parts of the khanate; they do not require much irrigation.

They use jougara for food—the grain instead of oats, and the straw instead of hay—for horses and

other cattle. They sow a quarter of a *batman* on a *tanap*, and gather from eighty to one hundred and fifty *batmans*.

They sow lentils and peas in small quantities.

Of kitchen-garden productions the Khivese cultivate water-melons, melons, pumpkins, carrots, and garlic. The fame of the Khivan melons has reached even Pekin, and in the number of the presents sent thither every year from Chinese Tartary, these are always included.

They cultivate the following manufacturing and dyeing productions:—cotton, hemp, tobacco, madder, and flax.

Their agricultural implements are of course very simple, and consist of a plough with a cast-iron, but sometimes wooden, ploughshare, and a wrought or cast-iron spade for levelling the ground; a shovel and pitchfork for harvesting the jougara, and a plank with iron teeth, similar to our harrows. They plough the ground in general with horses or bullocks yoked in pairs.

They employ horses for thrashing the corn, causing them to move in a circle round a post, about which are spread the sheaves of corn.

It is difficult to estimate the quantity of cultivated land in the khanate. The estimate made by Danilevski in his time has hitherto been accepted. He supposes that the quantity contained in the

entire settled portion of the khanate on the left bank of the Amou amounts to 700,000 deciatines, or 1,866,666 tanaps.* A considerable portion of the cultivated land belongs to the Khan, his relations, chief dignitaries (of whom several own from two to three thousand tanaps), to the functionaries, priesthood, medrassas, and to the trading class. But we may nevertheless estimate that a million of the above quantity belongs to the common people. Taking into consideration the number of the population, this is a little over four tanaps to each individual. Such a result fully confirms the information received by Danilevski during his inquiries. A Khivese possessing eight or ten tanaps is accounted quite an opulent proprietor, whilst many Khivese maintain an entire family by the cultivation of one tanap of land.

The smallness of this proportion must not lead us to infer the insufficiency of unoccupied land in Khiva. This proportion is explained by the want of working hands.

The Khivese generally cultivate gardens round their houses, but of very small dimensions, notwithstanding the fact that gardens, owing to the extreme abundance of fruit, are very profitable. The gardens are always surrounded by a high clay wall having the shape of an oblong. In the

* Roughly, 1,800,000 of our acres.

centre of the garden there is generally a tank, filled with water from the nearest canal; small branches radiate from it in every direction, for watering the trees.

The chief fruit-trees cultivated by the Khivese are apricots of various kinds, giving a very large crop; plums of three sorts: peaches of three sorts; apples of four sorts; grapes of ten sorts; pomegranates; quinces, used as a fruit for eating, and having a pleasant acid flavour; and lastly, the *jilla*, a berry which they dry and use with flour for making confectionery.

Of the above-mentioned fruits, only the pomegranates, fig-trees, and vines are buried in the winter; no means of any sort are taken to protect the others from the cold. After severe frosts, the fruit-crop is not so abundant as after a warm winter, but the trees themselves never perish. Besides fruit-trees, the mulberry-tree is cultivated in Khiva in large quantities near the canals. This tree becomes covered with green earlier than others, and the first green serving as food for silk-worms, sells tolerably dear.

The silver and pointed poplar also grow in the gardens; the former in small quantities, but the latter in abundance. It adorns the borders of the gardens and edges of the tanks, and attains the height of fifty feet. The abundance of this

wood permits the proprietor to use it for building purposes, such as making floors and ceilings in the houses and serais, for girders between walls, and also for the construction of boats.

Besides these there are the *narouan* and *karaman*, a sort of elm; the one is distinguished from the other by its growing perfectly straight. It is very handsome, branchy, and affords much shade, attaining the height of thirty-two feet. Of the second tree they make carts and wheels.

Like the fruit-trees in Khiva, the other trees are also the result of laborious improvement of the ground and frequent irrigation.

A great deficiency of meadows and pasture hinders the development of cattle-rearing, which is carried on in very small proportions, and forms an unimportant branch of Khivan rural industry. In the settled portion of the khanate are reared sheep, horned cattle, camels, asses, and horses.

The sheep are of two breeds, the Bokharian and Kirgiz; there are very few, however, of the former. They keep them in the stable the whole year round, and feed them with the straw of jougara; even a rich proprietor does not possess more than ten or fifteen head. The horned cattle are usually very small and weak, and are used principally for field labours. The camels of the one-humped breed are powerful and tall, and carry a load of

from fifteen to eighteen pouds. The farmers keep very few of them, transmitting their produce into the interior principally by means of carts; camels for the use of caravans are generally hired from the nomad tribes.

The horses in Khiva are of three breeds: Kirgiz, Korabires, and Argamaks. The first are of small size, weak, and awkward; they are used for field labours and in harness, but only by poor people for riding purposes. The second breed is formed by crossing the Kirgiz mare with the Argamak. The horses of this breed are strong and tolerably well-made; they have short legs, are broad-chested, with powerful hind-quarters; they are used for the saddle only. The Argamaks are horses of pure Turkoman breed, to which we have already referred in our review of Turkestan. The two latter breeds of horses constitute an article of luxury amongst the Khivese, and are very expensive. There are no establishments for horses, no herds of them; they buy the Argamaks from the Yomouds, who wander in the settled parts of the khanate, and occupy themselves in rearing them, though to a very small extent.

The cattle-breeding of the various tribes who roam in the khanate is very diverse; in addition, our information on this point is very incomplete and scanty.

Lastly, the inhabitants of the southern part of the khanate principally occupy themselves in silk-breeding; but apparently with no great success, as the silk obtained in the khanate does not fetch a good price.

Manufacturing industry is incomparably less developed in Khiva than in the remainder of the Central Asian khanates, and does not meet even the very limited demands of her inhabitants. It consists in the domestic manufacture of the coarsest half-silk and cotton stuffs. From the former the Khivese make gowns, and from the cotton they weave a thick cloth, which, undyed, is known under the appellation of *biaz*, but, dyed blue, is termed *bouyak*. From these stuffs the Khivese prepare all their clothing. Metallic manufactures hardly exist at all; all necessary articles in iron, cast-iron and copper, are procured from Russia. As in all Central Asia, they have no idea of making glass in Khiva. Gunpowder of very inferior quality is manufactured in small quantities in the neighbourhood of Kounia Ourgenj.

The trade in the interior of the khanate is insignificant; it is almost exclusively in the hands of the Sarts, and is carried on in all the towns on regular bazaar days, but it is confined to the barter of raw materials against articles of domestic use. Even in places inhabited merely by a few nomads,

and where there is not a single house, they construct a market-place out of a few huts for a fair, which has all the appearance of a festival. The inhabitant of Central Asia, ignorant of the value of time, frequently goes to a fair twenty or thirty versts off, in order to buy a few needles or other such trifles. The Turkomans purchase corn of different kinds in the Khivan bazáárs, and bring in exchange Persian slaves, the sale of whóm forms a very important branch of commerce in Khiva.

In general, the interior commerce of the khanate is principally carried on by barter, the slaves alone being purchased for cash. The cupidity of the Khán and his employés, the heavy duties imposed on all goods, and even on articles of the first necessity, and, lastly, the brigandage exercised by the Turkomans, hinder the development of interior commercial activity. Khiva, Ourgenj, and Koungrad are reckoned the most industrial and commercial towns of the khanate.

Khiva carries on her foreign commerce with Russia and the Central Asian khanates, and also with the Turkomans and Kirgiz. Khivan caravans, to the number of from one thousand to two thousand camels, make their way in the spring to Orenburg, and in the autumn to Astrakhan, carrying cotton, silk, hides, gowns, and fruits to Nijni-Novgorod, and bringing in return kettles,

ironware, chintz used for female attire, cloth, sugar, iron, bad fire-arms, and trinkets.

Communication between Khiva and Astrabad is carried on by the Yomouds alone, who bring on a hundred or a hundred and fifty camels the wood of the beech for carding combs, and a small quantity of naphtha. Trade with Bokhara is somewhat more brisk; gowns and linen are exported thither, and tea, spices and paper purchased there.

The largest amount of commercial transfers falls to the lot of Russia. The total value of exports to Khiva reaches 2,000,000 roubles, and the exports thence into Russia, 1,000,000 roubles. Cotton is the prevailing article of export from Khiva, amounting in value to more than 500,000 roubles. Cloth and cotton prints are the chief articles of import; the latter to the amount of about 1,000,000 of roubles.

Notwithstanding the level surface of the khanate, the interior land communications present obstacles to movement at the passages over the river branches, or so-called *aryks*. The bridges constructed over the chief canals are very fragile, consisting merely of a few poles with earth scattered over them. However, materials for their repair are always at hand in the neighbouring gardens. All the small aryks are fordable; but in places it is necessary to make ramps to descend

by, before attempting the passage. Notwithstanding that the khanate is watered by a navigable river, and intersected by a number of canals suitable for vessels, the Khivese make but little use of these water communications. On the Amou they transport corn and salt from the northern part of the khanate to Khiva, and thence they sometimes send goods to Bokhara. The Khivan boats on the Amou are flat-bottomed, and have a length of from about 24 to 36 ft.; some of them carry as much as 500 pouds. The Karakalpaks, who live by fishing in the Aral Sea, have about 150 boats, of which the largest carry 300 pouds.

The means of land communication consists chiefly in riding on horseback; in certain cases, such as the dissemination of interesting intelligence, the nomads ride more than 120 versts a day. Then follows communication by means of goods transport, or caravans with camels, at a rate of from twenty-five to forty versts per diem.

The caravans by land and the cart-tracks deserve more attention than the rest, as it is by these means that commerce is carried on between Khiva and European Russia; and it is on these roads, in case of necessity, that the troops would be directed. But as the steppes, in the strict sense of the word, are passable everywhere except

by the muddy salt marshes, we must understand by the word "road" simply the direction followed from one station to another, and not such an artificial road as we expect to find in Europe. Thus, of these tracks, the following are those which most deserve attention :—

1. From the station Sarai Chikovsk on the Lower Oural, through the Lower Emba, Myn-sou-Alman, Barsa Kilmas, to Khiva. This route is the most ancient; it is more than 1,000 versts in length.

2. From Orenburg to Khiva, through Ak Tiubinsk, the Upper Emba, Fort Embenskoe, direct southwards to Aibougir, and thence to Khiva through Koungrad or Kounia Ourgenj. This route to Khiva is 1,395 versts in length.

3. The route from Orsk by Kara Boutak and Irgiz to Kazalinsk, and thence by the eastern shore of the Aral Sea. Between Orsk and Kazalinsk the postal road is 739 versts in length; beyond Kazalinsk several routes proceed. All have an important advantage over those on the western shores of the Aral Sea in this, that the distance between our settlements and Khiva is shorter by some hundreds of versts; besides which, forage, water, and fuel are almost everywhere to be found, though in small quantities, so that the movement of large bodies of troops, even in echelons, would prove very inconvenient.

4. The difficulties of movement on these roads caused attention to be paid to the road along the Yani River; wherefore during the interval between 1868 and 1870 the road from Fort Perovski through Irkebai was surveyed; but it proved unsuitable. The distance to Khiva is 750 versts.

This sketch of the land communications shows why it is that Khiva, insignificant in herself, can insult us almost with impunity. The inaccessibility of her frontiers constitutes her strength, and permits her to injure us by despatching brigands into our borders, by seizing our people, and by plundering caravans, which she has long practised. To avoid combating her unsuccessfully at the time of our first settlement on the Sir, it was proposed, as we mentioned before, to make use of the Aral Sea for the establishment of water communications, which, more convenient than those by land, might at a very early date, if needful, render it possible to disembark our troops on the delta of the Amou. But this line of operations also has its shortcomings.

The northern shore of the Aral Sea is quite desolate, wherefore it can in no way serve as a base for our operations. With the exception of one spot, there is not a single harbour where it would be possible to collect troops, supplies, and a transport fleet. Therefore we should have to take

for our base Kazalinsk, on the Sir, distant 740 versts from the shores of the Oural and 920 from Tashkend, where alone the necessary supply of provisions could be made. Besides the difficulties arising from the transport of heavy baggage, the preparation of fuel &c., it would be necessary to overcome the obstacles presented by the shoals and bars of the Sir and Amou. Immediately after disembarkation, means of an entirely different nature would be required; land transport, horses, camels, &c.

Of all the towns of the khanate, Khiva and Novo Ourgenj alone deserve this name in the modern acceptation of the term, as they enclose within their walls a somewhat numerous population, and manifest to a large extent the signs of commercial activity.

The general characteristics of Khivan towns may be described by the following sketch. Almost all the towns of the khanate are surrounded by clay walls, the decrepitude of which, united with the insufficiency of their armament, completely deprives them of any military significance. The environs of all the towns consist of cultivated fields, amongst which are scattered houses standing separate from one another. During the greater part of the year the inhabitants of the towns and their environs make use of the

water from the canals; but, late in the autumn, when the main canals dry up and are unable to supply water to the intermediate ones, the Khivese dig wells, which are however very shallow and soon exhausted, but, on the other hand, easily replaced by others, on account of the almost universal presence of water close beneath the surface of the earth. The houses, shops, and walls are constructed on the same pattern and with the same material in all the towns, so that they present everywhere a uniform aspect. Certain houses, belonging to the Khan and opulent people alone, are distinguished from the rest by their extent and a certain care in their finish. Of the stone buildings, of which however there are very few, we will speak when we come to the description of the towns where such structures exist.

The materials used by the Khivese in their construction are:—posts of poplar wood, brushwood and clay, mixed for greater strength with straw. The town walls are constructed in the following manner:—at intervals of ten *sajens** they fix posts of poplar wood in the earth; between these they place several upright rows of brushwood, bound together by cross-beams; the whole is then covered on both sides with thick layers of clay, so that the wall is usually four sajens thick at the base; but

* 1 sajen = 7 feet.

it always becomes narrower towards the summit. Around the walls they erect buttresses, also of clay, at intervals of from ten to twenty-five sajens; they are in the form of a cone bisected from apex to base. The height of the wall is about four sajens; loopholes for musketry discharges are pierced all round. The places for the gates are constructed of stone, and thick planks of the strong wood, called by the Khivese *parouan*, are used for gates. All the houses, without exception, are surrounded by walls such as we have just described, with this difference, that their circuit depends on the rank and means of the owner. The interior space includes both dwelling-place and garden. The part occupied by the dwelling-place is usually so constructed, that a covered passage leading to the outer gate divides it in half; each of these halves is subdivided again by clay walls, which form several large square courts; along the sides of these inner walls are constructed the separate apartments, one beside the other, with grated windows and carved doors. Along the flat roof of these chambers runs a covered gallery. In the centre of the court there is usually a tank of water, around which grow a few vines and poplars.

Vambéry reckons all the towns of the khanate at thirty-two; but most of these are quite insignificant, so that we shall merely dwell on those which

deserve our attention for some special reason. These towns and villages lie almost exclusively on the left bank of the Amou, and, starting from the south, we find them in the following order:—

1. Khazar Asp, a fortified town situated on one of the branches of the canal Polwan-ata, possessing a considerable number of shops; inhabited by Ouzbeks and Sarts.

2. Khanki, a village with a few dozen shops; has a fort.

3. Ourgenj, 31 versts from Khiva, one of the most considerable towns of the khanate, was at one time surrounded by an oblong clay wall, 225 sajens by 200 in dimensions, of which only fragments now remain. The town is irregularly built of clay houses to the number of 300; contains 15 mosques and 300 shops; its population reaches 2,000 souls; the wealthiest of the Khivan merchants live in this town, and here is concentrated their chief commercial and manufacturing activity; foreign merchants, purchase goods here.

4. Kitai consists of a house of the Khan's with a tower, and of some private houses.

5. Bent, a small fort on the banks of the Amou.

6. Khojeili is an unfortified town, consisting of 180 houses and 150 shops scattered about irregularly.

7. Koungrad consists of the Khan's palace, surrounded by an ancient garden; of the houses of

the commandant of the town and his two assistants, 7 mosques, 315 shops, and some private houses. All the structures are of clay, and surrounded by walls. Formerly the town was fortified, and was then governed independently of Khiva, which at times it even invaded.

All the towns hitherto named, lie, if not on the banks of the Amou, at least at a very short distance from it. The following towns lie further westward of the river, and, commencing in the north, come in the following order :—

8. Kounia Ourgenj, one of the oldest towns in the khanate, possessing numbers of ruins. Very indistinct traditions exist of the destruction of this town by the Kalmucks. The newly inhabited portion of the town is near the ruins. The chief buildings are, the Khan's palace, surrounded by a garden and a clay wall ; there are about 135 houses and 70 shops. Here we find the custom barriers, where, however, goods are not inspected, but the number of camels, packages, and trading caravans passing through is ascertained.

9. Porsou, to the south-east of Kounia Ourgenj ; the village has some historical notoriety, as it was here that Prince Bekovich Cherkasski was murdered.

10. Tashaouss is fortified by a quadrilateral wall with round towers. The length of the wall is 300

sajens; height 4 sajens; and thickness below 3 sajens, and above 1½ foot. It is ruinous in many parts; the interior of the fortifications is uninhabited, and there are no military stores or means of defence within them.

11. Shah Abad is surrounded by a ruinous clay wall. There are 100 shops in the town.

12. Kosh Koupyr is surrounded by a clay wall, 150 sajens long.

13. Khiva, the chief town of the khanate and place of residence of the khans; it is surrounded by two clay walls with towers at the corners. There are in Khiva 2 palaces, 17 mosques, 22 medrasses, a caravanserai, a covered market, and 260 shops scattered in different parts of the town.

Among the most remarkable edifices are:—

1. The mosque of Pulwan Ata. It was constructed in the year 1811, in honour of the saint of that name, by the Khan Mohammed Rahim. It is built of brick, and adorned with a green cupola with a gilded top. The interior of the mosque is covered with tiles of various colours, and is divided into two compartments. In the first, opposite the entrance, is placed, on a raised platform, the tomb of Mohammed Rahim, surrounded by a railing of copper; above the tomb is suspended a chandelier and the banner which belonged to the deceased Khan. On the right and left of this tomb are two

others; in the one is buried the Kirgiz Khan Shir Ghazee; and in the other, Allah Kouli Khan, who died in 1842. In the second compartment of the mosque, feebly illuminated by one single grated window, lies the tomb of the saint Pulwan Ata, having a length of twelve feet, a breadth of five, and height of four.

2. The mosque Send Bai, constructed of brick in the reign of Allah Kouli in 1835. It is adorned with columns of stone of tolerably correct dimensions, and illumined by large gothic windows, which have no glass, but iron gratings; the mosque is covered by a flat roof.

3. The palace of the Khan, constructed beside the town gates, Shir Mohammed Ata. It contains several suites of apartments; some occupied by the Khan and his family, others set apart for the chief officials. Each of the latter has his own apartment in this palace, whither he must repair after evening prayer to await the commands of the Khan. Around the palace is a clay wall. Opposite the chief entrance a pit, 15 feet deep, is excavated. In this criminals are punished.

4. The caravanserai was constructed in the year 1823, during the reign of Mohammed Rahim. It is situated in the eastern part of the town, and its single wall forms part of that of the town. It is built of brick in two stories, in the form of a

regular quadrangle, the interior of which forms a square for the unlading of goods. Each side is 30 sajens in length. There are 46 shops in the lower story, and as many apartments in the upper one, for the accommodation of travellers; the only gates are on the southern side. Covered arcades, made of clay, are adjacent to the caravanserai.

There are no open squares in Khiva. The streets are narrow, tortuous, incredibly filthy, and the general aspect of the town is that of an irregular heap of earthen clods. A bazaar is held twice a week, on Mondays and Fridays, in the vicinity of the shops along the town wall, and attracts large numbers of the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns and farms. The population of Khiva does not exceed 4,000 souls of both sexes, and consists mainly of officials, priests, and merchants. The Sarts predominate amongst these, then follow the Persians and Ouzbeks. The environs of the town consist of cultivated fields, gardens, and houses belonging in great part to the Khan and his associates. Amongst these villas, that of the Khan, Angerik, is somewhat neater and prettier than the rest.

Touching the form of government, the Khan is the autocratic ruler of the entire khanate, and enjoys all the prerogatives of power. He partly shares his judicial powers with the priesthood.

The following are the officials next in rank to the Khan:—

1. The *Inaks*, of whom there are usually four; two must be nearly related to the Khan, and two of the same tribe.

2. The *Nakib*, the head of the priesthood, is always chosen from amongst the *Saids*, or descendants of Mahomet.

3. The *Bi*, or most familiar companion of the Khan in time of war.

4. The *Ataliks* are a species of state councillors.

5. The *Mekhter* is a sort of grand vizier. He is chief treasurer, and watches over the revenues and disbursements of the state.

6. The *Koush Begi* shares the duties of the mekhter with regard to the levying of taxes and supervision of the dredging of water-courses.

Besides this series of high dignitaries, there are many other inferior officials employed in military or civil duties.

Judicial trials are generally conducted by the Khan in person, and his verdicts are at once carried into execution. Owing to the absence of laws, all matters are decided at his will, and always to the advantage of his exchequer. The punishments inflicted by him, as we have before remarked, are extremely cruel. Those found guilty of ordinary offences are deprived of all

their property and subjected to corporal punishments, but for crimes they are condemned to the most excruciating tortures. Only very minor offences are submitted to the judgment of the priests, according to the Koran, and then only with the mutual consent of the litigants. Lately, with the augmentation of the absolute power of the Khan, the power of the priesthood in judicial matters has very much decreased.

The Khan holds his court of justice daily. As at this time all are admitted, the Khan very frequently has to hear and adjust the most trifling family differences. It is related that the Khan becomes very much interested when an exasperated married couple begin to dispute and scold before him; he tries in every way to inflame them still more, and laughs till the tears come into his eyes if the tender spouses begin, rolling in the dust, to fight before him.

The revenues of Khiva are very limited. They are raised by a land tax, and an impost on cattle and trade. Their collection is always accompanied by abuses, to which the ruler himself is no stranger. According to the estimate of Danilevski in 1842, the income of the khanate might be reckoned at 800,000 roubles. It is only natural that since that time this income must have become considerably diminished, in consequence of interior disorders,

and the secession of almost all the Turkoman tribes.

The military forces of Khiva consist of regular infantry and militia cavalry. The regular troops, organised in 1850 after the model of Bokhara, consist of one battalion, recruited principally from Persian captives. Although the numerical strength of this battalion is supposed to be a thousand men, yet in reality it consists of a few dozen Sarbaz, whose chief duties consist in guarding the person of the Khan. Their clothing consists of a red nankeen tunic, loose trousers, lamb-skin hat, and great clumsy boots. The Sarbaz are armed with bad muskets and with sabres. They receive their pay partly in kind and partly in money, according to a fixed scale. These troops have not the remotest idea of military matters.

The mounted militia, called out in time of war only, consists chiefly of Turkomans. Up to the year 1855, the Khivan khans placed in the field from 25,000 to 30,000 horsemen, armed with sabres and lances, and in part with matchlocks. On active service this militia receives pay to the amount of five *tillias*,* and as much for each horse placed *hors de combat*. The artillery

* A golden tillia = 4 roubles = 12 shillings.
A silver tillia = 2 roubles = 6 shillings.

consists of a few dozen bad guns, and the Khivese are almost entirely unacquainted with their management.

As a rule, not excluding even the Ouzbeks, the Khivese are not remarkable for their courage, but, not having yet experienced a single defeat by regular troops, they are fully confident in their strength and invincibility.

Having completed this sketch of the khanate of Khiva, it may not be superfluous to discuss its significance for us as the objective of our military operations. This evaluation is made very minutely by Colonel Veniukoff in his remarkable work, "Materials for a Military Survey of our Frontiers in Asia."* In this he considers in detail all our means, and probable routes and modes of action against the Khivan khanate. We quote the results at which he arrives in his investigations.

If, in consequence of the ancient historical enmity of Khiva towards Russia, or of the inevitable advance of the latter into Central Asia, it became necessary to adopt decisive measures against Khiva, then Russia would encounter many more obstacles than she has hitherto done in the whole space extending from the shores of the Oural and Irtysh to the Celestial Mountains and the valley of the Miankal. The

* Published in the *Voyenni Sbornik* lately.

chief reason for this, however, does not lie in the military and political might of Khiva, but in her inaccessibility; and, in fact, reviewing Russia's lines of operations against Khiva, we find:—

From the side of the Caspian sea we may advance by three roads:—From Krasnovodsk, from Fort Alexandrovsk, and from the ancient fortification of Alexankrovsk on the Mertvi Koultouk. But the latter locality is a desert at the present time, and cannot therefore serve as a base of operations for troops; in addition to which, it is difficult of approach from the sea. Fort Alexandrovsk, in Mangishlak, 900 versts from Khiva, is a not less inconvenient starting-point for a military expedition. The possibility of a campaign on the road from Krasnovodsk has been ascertained by experience, at least as far as Sari Kamysh. But this route presents tremendous obstacles, from the insufficiency of water and grass, but chiefly from the complete state of dependence of the advancing force on the Turkomans, the enmity of whom might render the movement dangerous, and even defeat it completely, by depriving the troops of their means of transport. Judging by the nature of the ground explored in 1871, we may be allowed to doubt whether a stronger force than two battalions of infantry, with a battery of artillery, could move from Krasnovodsk on Khiva; the idea of taking

cavalry must evidently be abandoned altogether, although indispensable in the steppes.

The routes from the Oural through the Emba steppes and the Oust-Ourt present almost as many inconveniences as those from the Caspian Sea. We admit that it would be easier here to find camels for transport from our subject Kirgiz, and that greater stores of the munitions of war and provisions might be previously amassed on the Upper Emba; but nevertheless, the route from Emba to the Khivan oasis presents 900 versts of naked steppe, on which the troops would have to suffer not fewer privations than on the road to Sari Kamysh, and where in addition they may be harassed, if not by the Turkomans, by the Kirgiz devoted to Khiva, and by the Khivese themselves.

The route by the Aral Sea, notwithstanding several advantages, and especially that of being able to traverse quickly 400 versts without being exposed to any other dangers than occasional storms, has also considerable inconveniences. Firstly, we have here no suitable points for the embarkation of troops; secondly, the northern shore of the sea is not a base in itself; this must be sought in the Sir, which has only a foot and a half of water on the bar; thirdly, the disembarkation on the southern shores of the Aral Sea might miscarry, not perhaps owing to

the resistance of the natives, but to the obstacles opposed by nature, for the entire northern part of the delta of the Amou lies low, is marshy, and in the flood season even becomes a series of lakes and impassable swamps. It is true that, in the event of war with Khiva, we should not neglect this route entirely; but, in the first instance, it would be used in an auxiliary sense. But it is necessary to take into consideration the perils which might possibly be encountered from the marshy nature of the soil, both in a campaign in the interior of the country and in the pitching of a camp. Regarding means of land transport, we say nothing; the Karakalpaks have only to depart from the shores of the Aral Sea to place our troops in the greatest embarrassment as to the transport of their baggage. Therefore the route by the Aral Sea necessitates almost as much dependence on the nomads as the routes from Krasnovodsk and Emba. But beyond this, the success of movement on it is dependent on the season of the year, for winter navigation on the sea is dangerous, and in summer, after the close of the flood season, it is impossible for steamers to ascend as high as Koungrad, and it would be necessary to effect the disembarkation sixty versts to the north of that town near the sea.

The road from the Lower Sir to Kipchak and

Khojeili is the shortest between the settled portions of Khiva and Russia; but it is extremely inconvenient for detachments of any strength, on account of the scarcity of water, the number of salt marshes, the moving sands, and deficiency of grass. Besides this, it leads only to the right bank of the Amou, not into the centre of the Khivan oasis. The passage across the Oxus into the Khivan dominions might offer considerable difficulties. The other routes are equally difficult.

Thus, the difficulty of access to Khiva for an offensive movement on the part of Russia is not open to doubt.

However, considering the past military expeditions from the time of Bekovich down to the latest reconnaissances made to Sari Kamysh, Irkibai, and Dau Kara, and down to the navigation of the Amou as far as Koungrad, we may without great error suppose that the following movements may be executed with a considerable probability of complete and final success:

From Krasnovodsk, or the Balkhan Mountains, with a detachment of two battalions of infantry, eight guns, and a sotnia* of Cossacks, which would ultimately reduce its strength to one-half by forming a series of fortified posts along the line of operations. For this movement not less than

* Or troop.

sixty days would be requisite, and as many as 2,500 camels for the transport of baggage, provisions, hospital and artillery stores, &c., &c.

From Emba, along the western shores of the Aral Sea, through the isthmus which divides it from Lake Aibougir, to Koungrad, or by the western shore of that lake, to Kounia Ourgenj—one battalion and a half, with four guns, and a sotnia of Cossacks; one company of infantry and two guns would be left near Ourgou Mouroun, for the defence of the road and the formation of a post which might take charge of and protect the supplies brought thither from Emba and by the Aral Sea. This column should have 2,200 camels, and march to Ourgou in echellons.

From Kazalinsk, by the Sir and Aral Sea, one battalion and a half, four guns, and a sotnia of Cossacks, who, with an effective organization of the Aral flotilla, if the latter be only punctual, may send a considerable portion of their baggage by water as far as the Gulf of Toushe Bass, and construct a post at Irkibai to protect their rear.

The best time of year for the execution of a similar threefold advance, which is more convenient and advantageous in many respects than any movement on a single road, is the autumn, from the end of August to the end of November; or the spring, from the middle of March to the

middle of May. The advance from Emba and from Krasnovodsk may be commenced almost simultaneously, notwithstanding the difference of distance, because the Krasnovodsk column will have to construct fortified posts as they march. The flotilla, with supplies, may leave the mouth of the Sir when the Emba column has reached Ak Swat.

By these arrangements, the troops of all three columns may reach the frontiers of the Khivan oasis almost simultaneously. Khiva, alarmed, if she does not make known her submission the moment our troops arrive, will be inevitably subdued, and but little time will indeed be requisite for her conquest. Supposing that the Emba and Krasnovodsk columns unite at Kounia Ourgenj, and that afterwards, having communicated with the columns of Turkestan, they advance into the khanate; two weeks will be sufficient for the campaign in Khiva itself, whose fate it can scarcely require a greater effort to decide than that of Tashkend, a town of 60,000 inhabitants, which was taken by a force of little more than 900 bayonets. After the capture of the chief town of the khanate, the conquest of the remainder would be an affair of second-rate importance; whilst, if it were to necessitate any strain on the powers of the active troops, this might easily be remedied by calling to the front those portions

of the Krasnovodsk column left in rear on the line of operations, and by moving up fresh forces from the Lower Sir to occupy their places. But even this would scarcely be requisite; for the column of Turkestan, in its turn moving along the Amou, by seizing the sluices of the canals, could inflict a fatal blow on the Khivese.

The success of the undertaking is partly guaranteed by the weakness of Khiva. Let us admit that the Sarbazes are now organized in Khiva, that she has received some thousands of tolerably good muskets from India, perhaps even some good powder and other warlike stores, and that, lastly, the Khan possesses sixty guns with carriages; how are the Khivan troops to obtain discipline, tactical education, good generals, military experience, and that firm organization of the military economy which might render possible the continuance of a prolonged strife? There exists nothing of all this; but, on the other hand, the Khan, on the first intelligence of the arrival of our troops from Emba and Krasnovodsk, will assemble his forces, which by their mere presence exhaust the country, and, if he dares to advance and attempt to arrest the course of our columns, he will return to Khiva, fatigued and probably defeated, only to augment the general confusion and terror. We may judge of the extent of this

terror from the alarm of the Khivese at the news of the advance, in 1871, of three companies and a half from Tash Arvad Kali, to Sari Kamysh.

Of a national war within the limits of the Khivan oasis it is not even necessary to speak. The people, crushed by centuries of despotism, are not equal to it, and it may be said that the establishment of Russian power in Khiva would scarcely encounter more opposition than was the case in Tashkend, Samarkand and Kouljouk. Thus, in reality, the expedition against Khiva dwindles to an ordinary campaign in the steppe, in which the difficulty lies, not in actual collision with an armed antagonist, but in traversing sterile tracts of land.

But before offensive movements against Khiva can be undertaken, we must occupy ourselves with the defence of our own frontiers from attacks on her part, and, consequently, consider the forces and means disposable for such a defence. It is true that Russia, along the whole extent of the shores of the Caspian and Aral seas, is secure from the attempts of Khiva, destitute of a fleet. On the river Sir, also, the course of this river and the line of fortifications along it sufficiently guarantee our frontiers from the incursions of the Khivese and the nomad races subject to them.[1]

But the interval between the Caspian and Aral seas, in breadth 300 versts, opens a gate to the pilfering rabble, whose incursions have lately assumed a special aim—to excite the Kirgiz subject to our authority in the southern portion of the Orenburg steppe, and attack transports and travellers along the Orsk-Kazalinsk road. All the efforts of the military departments of Orenburg have been directed to the closing of these gates; in the course of the last few years they have erected in the Trans-Oural steppe not less than four fortifications, supplementary to the three before existing. These fortifications, however, do not effect their purpose, because they are not situated directly in the gates—for example, on the sands of Samm—but much more to the north, so that they leave openings of some hundreds of versts very convenient for the incursions of these brigands. Besides, in advance of these there are still considerable expanses of steppe, occupied by our Kirgiz, and in nowise protected from the direction of Khiva. That is why, though granting to the fort at Emba its administrative importance and character as a good halting-place in case of a campaign against Khiva, we must say that it plays a secondary part in the defence of our Trans-Oural steppe. Of the Lower Emba fort we cannot maintain this, so that its abolition, together with

the forts Karaboutak, Ak Tiubinsk, and Ouilsk is much to be desired. Then the detachments and material now employed in garrisoning them might be transferred southwards, and by that means attain a more effective defence of our frontiers with less expense. This idea has been recognised to a certain extent in Orenburg also of late years; but the investigations made in the meanwhile have not brought to light a single spot in the Trans-Emba steppes or the Oust-Ourt fit for the construction of a permanent defensive point. For this reason, in the spring of every year, movable columns of considerable strength are sent out towards the Barsouks, the Aral Sea, and the northern Chink, from the Orenburg-Oural frontier, and scour the steppes till autumn. These columns succeeded in securing tranquillity on the Orsk-Kazalinsk road during the years 1871, 1872.

All provisions, excepting meat, are obtained by every fortification in the Orenburg steppe from beyond the Oural by means of pack animals, for which reason they are very dear. For instance, a chetvert of flour costs at the Emba post nine roubles.* The line of the Sir now supplies its own corn from the environs of Perovsk; thus deficiencies, especially supplies for the flotilla, are brought from Sir Darya province. They use their

* About 1*s.* 4*d.* a peck.

own cattle indeed for meat everywhere. The clothing of the Orenburg troops comes entirely from European Russia; but part of the clothing of the soldiers on the Sir, viz., linen and leathern pantaloons, are made in Turkestan of local materials. The armament is obtained entirely from European Russia, and consists, in rifle battalions, of the Berdan rifle, and, in the other battalions of regular infantry, of the needle-gun; but in these latter the troops are not yet complete. The Cossacks have a very nondescript armament; so that, even in the same sotnia, all the men are by no means always armed in the same manner. The field artillery have breech-loading guns, but in the forts the guns are of the old system, smooth-bored.

These forts have usually the profiles of field-works, or somewhat larger in dimensions, but without stone revetments. However, these defences are but little required, for the fort of the steppe is not a point intended to stand a siege, but is merely the head-quarters or camp of a movable column, or, in general, of any detachment of Russian troops, whose business it is to act as a patrol or scouting-party, and not as a garrison of one given spot enclosed behind ramparts. Simple ditches and ramparts, which it would be impossible to leap on horseback, instead of

regular fortifications, are amply sufficient for the defence of such a camp, or rather, of the stores contained in it; whilst, in case of musketry fire, the sheds themselves occupied by the men and stores are well adapted for defence, without erecting large and complex works, which demand much time and material for their equipment and maintenance. The construction of forts on commanding heights, as, for instance, has been done at Kara Boutak and Lower Embensk, is also unnecessary, for it brings no real advantage, whilst it places the garrison at a greater distance from the water.

The means of transport in the Aral territories consist chiefly in the pack-camels of the Kirgiz, each of which can carry from twelve to sixteen pouds, according to the time of year. In the sands of Kara Koum it is sometimes necessary to harness camels to vehicles, as horses become powerless.

The hire of a good camel may amount to twenty silver roubles or more per mensem, according to the journey's object and the nature of the road to be traversed. Sometimes the transport of goods is effected by carts drawn by horses or bullocks, but along the Sir, to a great extent by steamers of the Aral flotilla, which transport 120,000 pouds every year, but, on the other hand, require 375,000 pouds

of dry *saksaoul*, and a considerable quantity of coal.

In Khiva, notwithstanding the numbers of the settled population, the means of transport are almost the same as among the Kirgiz, so that carts are rarely to be seen. On the other hand, there are not a few pack-asses and mules, which combine, to a certain extent, the good qualities of the camel and the horse. It is worth remarking that, during a campaign in the steppe, it is possible, and also useful, always to have a certain reserve of camels without burdens and empty baskets at their sides, in order, on the one hand, to load them with the packs of animals who are fatigued, and on the other, to carry the men in rotation. This renders it possible for infantry to march from twenty to thirty versts in the twenty-four hours, halting but rarely, and then only at places particularly suitable for it.

The medical organization for our troops consists of hospitals in certain of the forts, and in doctors who are attached to the troops. Our means are in general insufficient, especially in the event of epidemic maladies, as was proved during the cholera season of 1872. More than half the medical men allowed by the State were wanting in the troops of the Turkestan military district, according to the report of 1870. However, the task of medicine is rendered easier in the Aral steppes by the

excellent climate, so that the sickness of the troops there is less than, for instance, in the Kazan district, notwithstanding frequent campaigns and bivouacs under the bare sky. It will become still less if the accommodation for the rank and file be improved, as up to this time they have frequently had to live in mud huts. The introduction into general use of double-felt tents, to replace these damp clay structures, is very desirable in a hygienic point of view, and all the more so that, in case of the infection of one place, they can be removed to another. They are not difficult to keep in repair, thanks to the vicinity of the Kirgiz, who manufacture felt; also the facility with which they can be carried assures the soldier a covered dwelling-place even during campaigns. The troops have long prized the advantages of this nomad dwelling, and are as fond of it as they are of tea, which was used by them long before its introduction into the official lists of supplies in the year 1872.

Such are our means of offence and defence for the approaching operations in the khanate of Khiva.

THE END.

VIRTUE AND CO., PRINTERS, CITY ROAD, LONDON.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018